

FOUNDATIONS

LESSON #2: “THE FULLNESS OF GOD: LOVE-FULL”

Intro. Tonight we’re going to continue our series on the “Fullness of God”

1. Paul writes in **Ephesians 3:19** and says *“that you might be filled with all the fullness of God”*
 - a. We’re going to look at **how** Paul says we can be filled with God’s fullness
 - b. He says it has to do with knowing the love of Christ
2. The most important thing we can know about God is His love
3. If we understand the meaning of love and allow God to fill us with His love, our lives will never be incomplete or unsatisfied

Ephesians 3:17-20 (NKJV)

17 that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love,

18 may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height--

19 ***to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.***

20 Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us,

I. THIS IS SOMETHING WE’VE GOT TO _____

A. WE NEED TO _____ THE LOVE OF GOD

1 John 4:8 (NKJV) He who does not love does not know God, for ***God is love.***

1. Knowing God’s love is what keeps us grounded

Ephesians 3:17 (NKJV) that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, ***being rooted and grounded in love.***

- a. This is one of the most important focuses of our faith
- b. *“God loves me!”*
- c. With that basic faith we can stand up against anything

- d. This is the reason Paul uses the words ***rooted and grounded in love***
 - e. If we have a firm faith that God loves us it *roots and grounds us so things don't bother or move us as easily*
2. You can sense in Paul's writing in **Eph. 3** almost a desperation
- a. "You've really got to ***know this***"

B. HE'S SAYING, LOVE IS THE _____

- *Knowing God's love is the "master key"*
- *Everything else God has for us or will do in us is unlocked when we know His love*

Ephesians 3:17-18 (TLB)

17 And I pray that Christ will be more and more at home in your hearts, living within you as you trust in him. May your roots go down deep into the soil of God's marvelous love;

18 and may you be able to feel and understand, as all God's children should, how long, how wide, how deep, and how high his love really is; and to experience this love for yourselves, though it is so great that you will never see the end of it or fully know or understand it. And so at last you will be filled up with God himself.

- 1. This knowing is more than a casual, "Oh yeah, I know God loves me"
 - a. When Paul says for us to *understand or know* the love of Christ, he's talking about more than *gaining a mental concept*
 - b. This means literally to *grasp hold of* or to *get it*

**C. WHEN WE REALLY KNOW THE LOVE OF GOD IT _____
 _____ GOD HAS FOR US OR CAN DO THROUGH US**

- 1. It's *the master key* for everything else
 - 2. **Ephesians 3:19** says *"to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God."*
 - a. *"Knowing the love of Christ"* is more than something that gives us a little security when we're feeling insecure
 - b. It's what leads us into being *filled with all the fullness of God*
- *This is why Paul was so insistent about us knowing the love of God. When we know His love we are filled with all the fullness of God!*

II. A _____ OF LOVE

Romans 8:35-39 (NKJV)

35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

36 As it is written: "For Your sake we are killed all day long; We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter."

37 Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.

38 For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come,

39 nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

- *We can see God's love breaking in on whatever is going on in our lives if we'll look for it*

A. GOD'S LOVE IS _____

Psalm 136:1-3 (ESV)

1 Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good, for ***His steadfast love endures forever.***

2 Give thanks to the God of gods, for ***His steadfast love endures forever.***

3 Give thanks to the Lord of lords, for ***His steadfast love endures forever.***

- *This phrase, "His steadfast love endures forever" is repeated 26 times in Psalm 136 alone*
- *It means God's love is "firm, fixed, and sure"*

2. Jesus' death for us was an incredible demonstration of love

Romans 5:8 (NKJV) But ***God demonstrates His own love toward us***, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

John 15:13 (NKJV) Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends.

- a. He literally couldn't show us in any greater way how much He loves us
- b. The word for God's love is the Greek word, "*agape*"

- *love, agape (ag-ah-pay); Strong's #26: A word to which Christianity gave new meaning. Outside of the NT, it rarely occurs in existing Greek manuscripts of the period. Agape denotes an undefeatable benevolence and unconquerable goodwill that always seeks the highest good of the other person, no matter what he does. It is the self-giving love that gives freely without asking anything in return, and does not consider the worth of its object. Agape is more a love by choice than philos (another Greek word for love), which is love by chance; and it refers to the will rather than the emotion. Agape describes the unconditional love God has for the world.*
- *The following is a confession of God's love for us; "God is undefeatable and unconquerable in His benevolence and goodwill toward me. He always seeks my highest good in everything. He is self-giving in His love, gives freely without asking anything in return, and considers me worthy of His affection. He chooses to love me and He loves me unconditionally!"*

3. We aren't just subjects, people, or "ants in God's ant farm"; we're His children

Psalms 103:11-13 (MSG)

11 As high as heaven is over the earth, so strong is his love to those who fear him.

12 And as far as sunrise is from sunset, he has separated us from our sins.

13 As parents feel for their children, God feels for those who fear him.

ex. God's love for us is far greater than anything we can imagine. The closest thing we can probably relate it to is our love for our children.

- ***If we really know this everything else in life and in our relationship with God will open up; we will be filled with all the fullness of God!***
- ***God's love is steadfast; firm, fixed, sure***

B. OUR _____ HIS LOVE MUST ALSO BE STEADFAST

Psalm 112:7-8 (NIV)

7 He will have no fear of bad news; ***his heart is steadfast, trusting in the LORD.***

8 His heart is secure, he will have no fear; in the end he will look in triumph on his foes.

1. Our security comes from knowing and trusting in God's love for us

- *"He will have no fear of bad news, his heart is steadfast (firm, fixed, sure) trusting in the Lord. His heart is secure..."*

C. ONE OF THE GREATEST BENEFITS OF BEING FULL OF GOD'S LOVE IS THE _____

1. This is one of the themes of love in the Bible

- *Knowing God and knowing His love will help free us from fear*

2 Timothy 1:7 (NKJV) For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.

2. Most of us wrestle occasionally with fear and anxiety

- a. The best way to conquer it is to receive a greater revelation of God's love
- b. We need to dare to believe what God has said about Himself and us; that's what the following verse is all about...

Jeremiah 31:3 (NKJV) The LORD has appeared of old to me, saying: "Yes, I have loved you with an everlasting love; Therefore with lovingkindness I have drawn you.

c. God not only says He loves the world, He makes it personal

- *"Yes, I have loved you with an everlasting love..."*

3. Knowing this will drive out fear

1 John 4:18-19 (NKJV)

18 There is no fear in love; but **perfect love casts out fear**, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love.

19 **We love Him because He first loved us.**

- a. **1 Timothy 1:7** talks about a "*spirit of fear*"
- b. **1 John 4:18** tells us that fear involves torment ("fear of failure, fear of lack or need, fear of the future, etc.)

- *Fear is a demonic strategy to rob us of the enjoyment of life and our life with God*

- *We need to make up our minds (be steadfast) in our absolute trust in God's love for us*
- *We can and should be secure in His love; He's our Dad!*

Matthew 6:25-26; 31-32 (NLT)

25 “That is why I tell you not to worry about everyday life—whether you have enough food and drink, or enough clothes to wear. Isn't life more than food, and your body more than clothing?

26 Look at the birds. They don't plant or harvest or store food in barns, for your heavenly Father feeds them. And aren't you far more valuable to him than they are?

31 “So don't worry about these things, saying, ‘What will we eat? What will we drink? What will we wear?’

32 These things dominate the thoughts of unbelievers, but your heavenly Father already knows all your needs.

Psalm 23:4 (NKJV) Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; For You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.

III. THE _____ OF LOVE

Ephesians 3:20 (NKJV) Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us,

A. THE POWER THAT _____ THAT DOES *EXCEEDINGLY ABUNDANTLY ABOVE ALL THAT WE ASK OR THINK* IS THE POWER OF LOVE

1. Ephesians 3:20 follows Ephesians 3:19

Ephesians 3:19-20 (NKJV)

19 ***to know the love of Christ*** which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

20 ***Now to Him who is able*** to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us,

- a. When we know the love of Christ, we're filled with all the fullness of God and then, *NOW*, He's able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think
- b. God's love is the *master key* that opens up all kinds of possibilities to us

ex. *The power to get over things people have done to hurt us; to get over our own selfishness; to get over things we're afraid of; to live without that constant nagging worry or fear because we know God's love and know He'll take care of us.*

- *The power of love is the power to see God do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think*

PRAYER AND CONFESSION: *Jesus, thank You for loving me so much. I want to be filled with the fullness of Your love tonight. You are able to do exceedingly, abundantly, above all that I can ask or think. Even though fear may have hindered me in the past, I believe in the power of Your love to cast out all fear and worry; in Jesus' name, Amen.*

FILL IN THE BLANKS FROM LESSON #2

I. THIS IS SOMETHING WE'VE GOT TO __(GET)__

- A. WE NEED TO __(KNOW)__ THE LOVE OF GOD
- B. HE'S SAYING, LOVE IS THE _____ (KEY TO EVERYTHING!)
- C. WHEN WE REALLY KNOW THE LOVE OF GOD IT __(UNLOCKS EVERYTHING ELSE)__ GOD HAS FOR US OR CAN DO THROUGH US

II. A _____ (REVELATION) OF LOVE

- A. GOD'S LOVE IS _____ (STEADFAST)
- B. OUR _____ (KNOWING OR UNDERSTANDING) HIS LOVE MUST ALSO BE STEADFAST
- C. ONE OF THE GREATEST BENEFITS OF BEING FULL OF GOD'S LOVE IS THE _____ (FREEDOM FROM FEAR)

III. THE __(POWER)__ OF LOVE

- A. THE POWER THAT _____ (WORKS IN US) THAT DOES *EXCEEDINGLY ABUNDANTLY ABOVE ALL THAT WE ASK OR THINK* IS THE POWER OF LOVE