

The Knowledge of the Full Measure of Christ's Love

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 27 October 2013

Preacher: Don Coleman

[0 : 00] Take your Bibles and open them to Ephesians chapter 3.

! That's where we've been for the last couple of Sundays. And we'll be there a couple of more Sundays. Ephesians chapter 3. And the full text is 14 through 19.

Now the series is entitled The Riches of His Glory. And I'm doing this, preaching this short series, while I prepare to preach through the book of Joshua.

So in, I guess, three Sundays out, we'll be looking at that, starting with that, or somewhere around there. And no telling how long that'll take, but it'll be a good book for us to look through, so we'll be doing that on Sunday nights.

But tonight, Ephesians chapter 3, and I want to read verses 14, the larger text, 14 through 19.

[1 : 07] All right? He says, For this reason, I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man, that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height, to know the love of Christ, which passes knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

Now, stop right there. That is a prayer, or it's the description of the kind of praying that Paul was engaged in for the believers at the church at Ephesus.

And if he felt like this was the kind of praying that he should do for these believers in Ephesus, then this is a good model, a good framework.

Well, it provides us a tremendous substance for our prayers for one another. This is intercessory praying. Paul says, I bow my knees. That's how we know that he's talking about a prayer here. He says, I bow my knees. And by the way, the grammar suggests that he is continually bowing his knees, continually going to prayer in behalf of the Ephesian believers.

[2 : 42] So he says, I bow my knees unto the Father, that he would grant you certain things. I'm just kind of paraphrasing what he has said. He would grant you certain things that he would, in a sense, reach into his treasury, the riches of his glory.

And out of those riches, he would give you some unspeakable gifts, some incredible, incredible gifts. And what are they? Well, there are four of them.

And we've already looked at two. And so there are two, or rather four, petitions. The first one we looked at a couple of weeks ago. To be strengthened.

Strengthened. He's talking about spiritual strength. A spiritual might that exists in the inner man. That's petition number one.

And then, number two, as a result of an answer to the prayer of petition number one, here's the second petition, because they build upon one another, that your life would be rooted and grounded in love.

[3 : 47] That's his second petition. We looked at that last week. A love whose foundation for your life reaches in all directions.

Downward and upward and outward in his word. And we looked at this last week. That our love, that we would have a, develop a love, a deep love for the knowledge of God.

That would be a downward love. A deep love for the knowledge of God. And an upward love. That our, we would have a great love for God himself. And then outward, that we would love, have a love for one another.

This kind of love he's talking about, it's a foundation for love for your life. Downward and upward and outward. And then I added his word. His word, that is his word. That we would have a love for God's word.

Every bit of it, including its demands and commands. That, some of which we don't really like that much, if we were to be honest. And, but we're to love his word.

[4 : 49] Every bit of it, as David said. More to be desired are they than gold. Yes, than much fine gold. Sweeter also than honey.

Honey's pretty sweet, isn't it? And the honeycomb. And so, his word. Alright, so, the third petition. We're ready for that tonight. This will be our focus tonight.

And I'm going to name it this way. The knowledge of the full measure of Christ's love. That's his petition.

His third petition. And these are building upon one another. The knowledge of the full measure of Christ's love. Let me read it again. It begins there in verse 18.

May be able. Here's the petition. May be able to comprehend. With all the saints. What is the width and length and depth and height. To know the love of Christ.

[5 : 47] Which passes knowledge. Now that's contained in those words. We have this third petition. Now, I would say to you that. At this point.

Though we may not realize it fully yet. We're getting in over our heads here. With this. I mean, this is an incredible petition. The answer for this petition is.

It's beyond. It's amazing. It's wonderful. Now think about it. To comprehend. The full measure. Of Christ's love for you.

That's basically what this petition is about. Now, as I've said. And I've already mentioned it. I've mentioned it a moment ago. And let me say it again. That these petitions of Paul's.

Are progressive. They're progressive. One builds upon the other. One lays a foundation for the next petition. And so forth. As we go throughout this description.

[6 : 49] Of the substance. Of his intercessory prayers. For the Ephesian believers. So it's progressive. Progressive. And so it takes spiritual strength. In the inner man.

In order to be rooted enough. And grounded enough in love. So that that foundation. Would enable us. To get a hold on. To fully grasp.

Christ's love for us. So it's progressive. Now, the Bible of course. You know says that we love him. Because he first loved us.

And the point of that is. It all started with God. It didn't start with us. Not at all. It started with God. And yet I would say that. From our vantage point.

From our perspective. Our place of consciousness. If you will. In a spiritual sense. We do not really know anything. About Christ's love.

[7 : 44] Until that point. When we begin to love him. We begin to love him. And then. You see. Love. Leads to more love. More love.

And that is. He loved us first. That's what the Bible says. And we know it to be true. The love of God. Paul said. In Romans 5. Has been poured out. That's how it's translated.

In the New King James. Literally means flooded. The love of God. Is flooded. Into our hearts. By the Holy Spirit. Who was given unto us.

That's a tremendous verse of scripture. So. He loved us first. And that love. For me. For you. Flooded into our hearts. Then.

Freed us. Enabled us. To love him. And I could not love him. Before. Before he saved me. It was not possible. But let me go on with this.

[8 : 40] And when I love him then. I begin then to realize. How much he loves me. Have you experienced this? He loved me first. So that I could love him.

And when I love him. Then I begin to realize. How much he loves me. And the more I love him. The more I understand. How. About how God loves me. And the more I understand. About. The love of Christ for me.

The more I love him. And it just. It goes. On and on. And that. Really is the essence. Of spiritual maturity. Spiritual growth. It's all founded. Rooted.

Again. In love. You see. Now. We have. Though. If we would admit it. We might as well. We have such a. A limited understanding.

Of the love of Christ. And that's every one of us. It's limited. And. This love. Is a whole lot. More. Than just.

[9 : 35] Attaching significance. To certain events. That have taken place. In our life. You know. Some certain great events. That have taken place. And then we say. See there. God really does love me. That's wonderful. But it's more than that.

Much. Much more than that. I was reminded of. My. 20th anniversary. Sherry. My. 20th anniversary. That's been a few years ago. I'm glad she's not here.

Because then I'd be compelled. To try to come up with the exact. Anyway. The 20th. And it was kind of a special. You know. 20th is special. 10. 20.

30. You know. Those milestones. And so we decided. That we would. Spend a night or two. At the place. Where we. Went on our honeymoon.

20 years before that. And. It was. You know. And it was in Fairfield Bay. Arkansas. Right now. I know that doesn't sound. Very exciting. It wasn't Hawaii.

[10 : 30] As. Some people do. Or Niagara Falls. As. Some. Others have done. It was in Fairfield Bay. Arkansas. This was before my parents. Moved there. And. Still live there now.

But anyway. We decided we would go there. We. See. We went there. On our honeymoon. And since my. Grandparents. And my parents. Owned. Lots. There.

At Fairfield Bay. Then we could stay. In one of the villas. For free. All right. So we didn't have any money. So. That was a pretty good deal. And so we. We did that. So. Here. 20 years later.

We want to go. And do that. And maybe if we can. If we. When we get there. If we can remember. Just the exact same villa. That we would stay there. Well.

We got there. And. You know. We kind of drove around the villas. And we kind of noticed that. No. The villas. Just didn't look.

[11 : 24] They didn't look quite the way they did. 20 years before. And. We asked the clerk there. The. Where you check in. If we could just look at one of them. And gave us a key.

And we went in. It smelled musty. And terrible. And so. The short. Part of that. Part of the story. Is we decided not to stay. In one of the villas. It wasn't going to be a very good honeymoon. Well my parents lived there by then.

But they. My dad was doing an interim in Missouri. And so. The house was vacant. So we just decided. We would just stay at the house. And we would spend some money. And go to a really nice restaurant.

One of the. What was that? One of the golf courses there. And so we got to. Looking around at that. And found a brochure. For a really nice resort. Not very far from Fairfield Bay. In Heber Springs, Arkansas. Called the Red Apple Inn.

[12 : 22] If you ever get a chance. To go to Heber Springs, Arkansas. The Red Apple Inn. Is just a beautiful. Beautiful place. And so we decided. We would travel over there. About 45 minutes.

And go to their nice restaurant. Have a steak dinner. Prime rib or something like that. Just as a special. Honeymoon treat. All right. So we got there to the. The restaurant. And of course.

You know. It's one of those settings. Where they have windows. On one side of the dining room. And you can look out. On Greer's Ferry Lake. It's just really beautiful. And. And.

And so when we got there. The waitress. Sat us. At a. A table. Away from the window. And we're sitting there a while.

And Sherry said. You know. I'd really like to sit by the window. And what she meant was. Don. Would you ask them. To move us. And so. You know.

[13 : 14] I kind of. I hate to admit it. I kind of said. Well. It's all right. Right here. You know. But. She was not to be denied. And the problem was. The.

By the time I. Decided I'd ask about it. They sat someone else. At the last table. Available by the window. There in the dining room. So no windows available. So there we are.

Sitting. Eating our prime rib. But not where we wanted to sit. And thinking. You know. This is just really hasn't been. A very good honeymoon. You know. We can't stay. At the place we wanted to stay. And going to stay.

At my mom and dad's house. And you know. And all that kind of thing. Well we were sitting there. And the table right next to us. There was a couple there. And.

They overheard us. Talking about. Our honeymoon. And. And you know. That 20 years ago. We. You know. Stayed at Fairfield Bay. And one of the villas.

[14:08] And so forth. And they heard all that conversation. I think we were sharing it with our waitress. And. After the waitress left. She said. You're here on your honeymoon. Did you have your honeymoon in Fairfield?

And come to find out. They had had. They had. Had their honeymoon. At Fairfield Bay. 20 years before. That. And. And. They were. Also.

Here at the Red Apple Inn. Commemorating their. Celebrating their. Anniversary. Not. And it was their 20th year. It was just amazing. You know. The. The thing we had.

In. In common. It's all the time. We were sitting there. Thinking. You know. We've got to go back. To Fairfield Bay. And. Stay at mom and dad's house. And this couple said.

You know. We're here. We had planned to stay another night. We have a timeshare here. And. They said. Would you like to have. Our room. For tonight.

[15:03] You know. Just out of the clear blue. And we said. Well. Sure. And so we got to stay. In this really nice hotel. Didn't cost us anything. And if I had been.

You know. A better husband. To have us move. To the window. We would have never met that couple. I'm exonerating myself here.

But at the same time. Telling you about. The love of God. For us. We've never met them. Never had that hotel room. And it just turned out to be. A really. Really.

Wonderful. Anniversary. Time. Now. I tell that story. And it's a little longer than I intended for it to be. It could be longer.

But. That's an example. Of. The love of God. For a couple of his beloved children. Because. God worked all that out for us.

[16:01] We. We. We didn't work that out. He did. And one thing. Led to another thing. To another thing. One. One dead end. To another opportunity. And. Led us to a different way. And then to meet a couple.

And then. And God worked all that out for us. He loves us. And so we. Look at that and say. Well see there. God. Really does love us. Isn't that wonderful? Right now.

As good as that is. What Paul is talking about here. In Ephesians 3. Is something much. Much. Much more than that. It's not to.

Just simply. Experience. And. Acknowledge. And find. Great. Blessing. In. Those. Certain events. That take place.

That. Show us. That. That we're his children. That he loves us. It's much more than that. Paul's talking about. Coming under. The full weight.

[16:59] Of the significance. Of Christ's love for us. The full truth of it. It goes way beyond. Anything we could experience.

In this finite. Part of our life. This. This part of our life. To. To. To. Get a hold of the full reality. The vastness. Of the love of Christ.

That's why Paul puts it this way. The width. And length. And height. Or depth. And height. Of the love of Christ. Or the knowledge of his love. Now that's the idea here.

Alright. So very quickly. I see. Three elements. To this petition. Of Paul's. And we might even call them. His goals.

In prayer. His objectives. Objectives. To reach. And. As soon as I start naming these. They're going to seem. Impossible.

[17:56] Impossible. Objective. Even contradictory. At. At some point. And they all have to do. With. The knowledge. Of Christ's love. The fullness.

Of his love. Alright. Here are the three points. On the front end. First. To. Attain. The unattainable. That's why I said. These may seem.

Impossible. Even contradictory. To attain. The unattainable. Number two. To. Measure. The immeasurable. And then number three.

We'll see all these right here. In this passage. Number three. To know. The unknowable. See. Those sound. Contradictory. Don't they? And. At the very least.

Impossible. Alright. So the first objective. In Paul. Of Paul's petition. Is to attain. The unattainable. And what did Paul say?

[18:53] And we kind of bring in. The. The previous petition. And. And let it. Flow. Run us into this. Third petition. That you. Being rooted. And grounded. In love.

That's petition number two. May be able. To comprehend. With all the saints. What? The love of Christ. Or. Specifically.

To know. The love of Christ. Now. First of all. When we're talking about. Attaining the unattainable. Who are the. Possessors. Of this kind of knowledge.

The knowledge of Christ. Christ. Well he tells us. And we just kind of. Pick. Pick this apart. With some of the key words. Here. In. In the text. The word able. Let's take that word first.

Able. The word able here. Does not refer to. Ability. That's what able meant. Ability. Well. Not in that sense. Not in the ordinary sense.

[19 : 46] Of ability. Or. We could add. It's not talking about. Some. Kind of. Aptitude. That a person might have. The word able. Literally means.

To have full strength. To have full strength. That is. It takes. Strength. A spiritual strength. To experience.

To really. Grasp. What Paul is talking about here. When he's talking about. The knowledge of God's love. So. Able. A full strength. To grasp it. To lay hold on it.

And then. And then. And that leads us to the next word. And that's the word comprehend. At least that's the word that is used in the New King James. I didn't check some of the other translations. To comprehend.

And what about that word? What does that mean? Well the word. Does not mean to understand something. That's the normal way that we would use the word to comprehend. And the first thing we think of is to understand.

[20 : 48] In fact we might even think those two words are synonymous. And in a sense they are. But a better translation of the word that's used here. Not comprehend.

But apprehend. That's something a little bit different. Apprehend. Now comprehend is a word that we might use quite often. It's very familiar to us.

But apprehend is kind of one of those words. Well I'm not just real sure. What that means. Apprehend means to. With the mind. Mentally.

Grasp. To mentally grasp. A concept. That Jesus really does love us. It means to. Lay hold of that. To fully. Fully grasp it. To apprehend it. Just. Almost. In fact. If there's anything synonymous with apprehend. It means to have.

[21 : 43] To have it. To lay hold of it. To possess it. It's to apprehend. The love of Christ. Not just to. Understand it. You know. Like you would understand something.

In the abstract. It's. It's. It's to. It's to. To really. Know it. To hold on to it. To get a hold of it. And then. To whom. Is given this mental apprehension.

Well. We discover that. In the word. In the word all. You don't need any commentary. On that word. You'll find out. If you were to study Greek. That all. In the Greek.

Means the same thing. As all. In the English. All. Just means all. Okay. And. Art. So. But. The point is. All. All. Of whom. Of whom. Well.

Then we come to the word saints. Saints. All. The saints. All. The saints. Now. Don't get too concerned about that word saints.

[22 : 42] Sometimes we. Have to explain that. The word just simply means separated ones. Set apart ones. We're set apart. From.

Sin. To. God. We're separated unto him. That's what the word saints means. And don't think that. You know. That the word saints.

Refers to some elite group. Of. Of. Of. Believers within the body of Christ. You know. Like the Catholics believe. And I don't agree with their view. Their understanding of the word saint.

That. Somehow a saint is a. A. An elevated spiritual position. Within. Within. Christianity. Like. Sainthood. You know. They have Saint.

Christopher. And they. Have. Saint. Francis. And Saint. Who's it. And Saint. What's it. And. You know. But. According to the Bible. I'm Saint. Don. Right.

[23 : 37] That's a. That's not. Saying anything about me. Saying anything about me. In the sense of what I have. What I'm able to do. Or. Or. Anything special about me. Other than. That I've been separated.

Set apart. By God. For God. And so. We're all saints. In that sense. And so. The truth is. We are all of us saints. If we've been born again.

By grace. Through faith. In the Lord Jesus Christ. When Paul wrote to the Romans. And really we could find this in some of his other letters. He wrote. To all that be in Rome. Beloved of God. Called to be saints. Separated ones. All right. So. The ability. The ability. Then. To. Lay hold on.

Fully grasp. This concept. That Jesus loves us. That ability. Is impossible. For all those. Only possible.

[24 : 33] For all those. Who believe in. The Lord Jesus Christ. So. The possessors. Of this knowledge. Is all the saints.

But also consider the progression of this knowledge. The progression of it. I said. That. What Paul was talking about here.

Was unattainable. To attain the unattainable. I said it's unattainable. But. That we could attain it. And that's not a contradiction. What I mean is.

That this knowledge. Of the love of Christ. The full love of Christ. Is. It's progressive. Infinitely progressive. That is.

We. We grow. In the knowledge. Of Christ's love. We grow in that. We. We mature in that. We. We. We. We. We. We. Know more and more about that.

[25 : 27] Our concept. That is. Of that love. His love. Becomes. Less and less. Abstract. As we. Grow. In our Christian faith. Becomes.

Less and less. Abstract. In our minds. And becomes more and more. Concrete. Concrete. Paul. In Philippians 3. One of my favorite books. In the New Testament.

Philippians. In Philippians 3. Is one of my favorite chapters. He said that the goal of his life. Was to know. God. Or know Christ. It's the goal of his life. To know Christ. Now.

On the one hand. We're. We might be thinking. Well. Doesn't Paul know him? You know. Doesn't he? And. And yet. Paul says in Romans 11. That.

His ways are past finding out. Now. Is that a contradiction? Paul's not contradicting himself. See. What he's talking about there. And what he's talking about here in Ephesians.

[26 : 22] Is a progression. In our knowledge. Of a certain aspect of God. In Philippians 3. It's to know God. And knowledge of him. His ways.

His person. And all these things. And. And progressing in that knowledge. Here in Ephesians. Ephesians 3. It is a. Progressive knowledge. Of his love.

His love for us. So it's. It. The possessors. Of this knowledge. Of the love of Christ. Is all. Saints. All those who are born again. And. The.

Progression of it is. The more I have. The more. I can. And will receive. And it grows. And grows. And grows. Throughout our lives. And this is what Paul's praying for. But not all.

There's more to it. And then there is the purpose of this knowledge. Now we're talking about. Attaining the unattainable. And. There's a purpose.

[27 : 17] Here. Of this knowledge. And it is. To serve him. What would you say. Is the supreme motive for Christian service.

Now I'm talking about. Joyful service. Service. With a smile. You know like. That old. Slogan. Texaco station. Was it service with a smile.

Anyway. What is the supreme motive. For serving the Lord. Is it duty. I hope it's not. Because that won't last very long.

Is it security. That is security. In. In our salvation. Certainly not. Certainly not. Is it reward.

I hope it's not. That way for you. Because that's so self-centered. Isn't it. I believe that. There is reward. In serving the Lord. Not only here.

[28 : 13] But even eternally. But we don't serve him. To get reward. So what is it. Is it our love for Jesus. It's not a trick question.

Well certainly. I mean that's a motive. For. For service. Our love for Jesus. We do it out of our love. Our love for Jesus. Energizes our service.

Paul said that the love of Christ. Constrains us. Yet I guess in a sense. It was a trick question.

Because I think there's another motive. For service. It's even greater.

Even greater. And. Truly supreme. And it is. The knowledge. That Jesus loves. Me. I think about that.

That he really loves me. And the more I know that. And comprehend that. Apprehend that. Grasp that. The fullness. Of that love. He has for me.

[29 : 13] What. What greater motivation. Could there be. To serve him. I mean my love for Christ. Is certainly a motive. That I love him.

But. In comparison to his love for me. How feeble. That is. And. And how inconsistent. Sometimes that is. Shouldn't be.

But is. The love of Christ. Never inconsistent. It's only. Our knowledge. Of that love. That is limited. And growing.

And this is what Paul is praying. That that love. The love of Christ. That we would. Apprehend it. More. And more. And more. So that we would.

Serve him. So. To attain. The unattainable. The second. Part of this. Paul's objective. Paul's objective. Is to measure.

[30 : 09] The immeasurable. And that. Is self-contradictory. Just the way it's stated there. And yet. It really. Is not. It's very logical.

First. You see. We. Conceptualize. That is. We. We. Try and get a hold. On the idea. That Christ loves us. It's a mental concept.

We're able to. Apprehend. And then. We. Try. To understand. The whole. Thing. As. The whole body of it. Like.

To understand it. As. A unit. In a sense. We. Analyze. This. Love. And that's okay. See. For example. I have a concept. In my mind.

Of. A beautiful. Brand new. Chevy. Camaro. A red one. No. Not lime green. A red.

[31 : 08] Chevy. Camaro. I. I. I. Have that concept. In my mind. And I can. Comprehend that. Can you? Well.

Just think about it. Well. You might pick a different. Brand of car. That's all right. And so. I can comprehend it. I can grasp that. In my mind. No problem. But I'm not satisfied.

With just the. Concept. Of a. Chevy Camaro. A red one. I'm not satisfied with it. Next thing I want to do. Is.

You know. To look at it. See it. You know. I mean. Have it all right out there. In front of me. Better yet. Parked in my driveway. So that I can.

Walk around it. And look at it. And the sides. And the front. And the back of it. And the top of it. And. Underneath it. And. You know. And. Open the door.

[32 : 06] And look inside of it. And. Pop up the hood. And look at the engine. Though I. Don't know anything about the engine. Jason knows that. I want to.

Take a look at it. To size it all up. You see. I want to know the width. Length. Depth. And height of it. Not literally. I'm not going to get out a tape measure. And measure the thing.

But you know what I'm talking about. Just. To really. Get a. A look at the whole thing. And to bring it then from. A concept in my mind. To a.

Touchable. Observable. Measurable. Reality. Now that's somewhat the idea. Though the illustration falls way short.

Because you know. Paul's not talking about Chevy Camaros. Or cars. Or anything such as that. He's talking about the love of Christ. The fullness of his love.

[33 : 02] For us. He's not talking about something. That we can step back. And look at as a unit. You know. As something we just kind of place out there. And you know. Look at it. And turn it around.

And so forth. Not. Not in that strict sense. He's not talking about that. We. Listen. We could spend all of eternity. Discovering the full dimensions. Of the love of God for us.

I mean. We. We. We would sooner be able to measure. The universe. No. We can't do that. But we would sooner be able to do that. Than measure the love of God.

For us. To get a full idea of how big it is. How full it is. And yet Paul did in a sense measure Christ's love. Here in this passage.

He measured the immeasurable. Full. And so we. We can measure the. Width. Of Christ's love.

[33 : 59] Have you measured the width of it? That is to measure how wide it is. How wide his love is. To measure the width of his love.

Is to measure. Or rather is to understand. That his love. Is broad enough. Wide enough. To encompass all of mankind.

It certainly is. Broad enough. Wide enough. To encompass all. All who have ever lived. All who live right now.

All who ever will live. His love is broad enough. To encompass all of mankind. There is no limit. In God's. Love. For all. The width of his love.

Can you begin to. To comprehend. To even kind of put a. A number. To the number of the redeemed.

[35 : 01] From every. Nation. And tribe. And people. And tongue. That God. Has saved. And is saving. And will save.

Could we possibly put. A number to that. The width. Of his love. And of course. The part of that measurement. That is most meaningful. To me.

Is that. It included me. It's. Wide enough. To include me. I'm not outside. Of his love. Because. God's love. God's love. God's love.

Somehow. Didn't include me. Or could not include me. Because. Of who I am. How miserable I am. It includes me.

The width of his love. Love. Then. There is the length. I mean. Can you measure. Have you. Measured the length. Of Christ's love. God said. In Jeremiah.

[35 : 54] 31. Verse 3. Yes. I have loved you. With an everlasting. Love. Therefore. With loving kindness. Have I drawn you. You know.

The. Love of Christ. Has no boundary. Or. In terms of length. There's no end to it. There's no ending point.

And there's no. Front end. Either. No front end. No back end. And this is really. A staggering truth. To. Apprehend.

That Paul's prayer is. And Paul's prayer is exactly that. That we could apprehend this. That there's no end to it. No beginning point. No ending. No ending point. Christ's love. For me. Did not.

Suddenly. One day. Begin. I know. It's difficult for us. We have finite minds. And. We can't think in terms.

[36 : 53] Of infinite. But God's love for me. Did not begin. At some point. You know. Because he saw me. Or thought of me.

Or. Certainly. Because I deserved his love. He didn't. Have a beginning point. His love for Don Coleman. For every believer. Was there. Before the beginning of time. In fact.

Even before that. In eternity past. Paul writes in Ephesians 1.4. According as he has chosen us. In him. Before the foundation. Of the world. That we should be holy.

And without blame. Before him. In. Love. In love. That's. Staggering. You see.

I can measure that. To a point. You can too. I can measure that. To a point. And with each. Passing year. Of my life.

[37 : 46] And spiritual growth. I'm able to. Measure it. A little bit further. Hopefully. You can do that. And yet. At the same time. I discover that the length.

Of Christ's love. For me. Goes on. And on. And on. It's immeasurable. Immeasurable. It has no beginning point. In my finite mind.

My finite mind. There's no beginning point. For it. And don't ever forget. There's no ending point. For it. Either. The width. The length.

Have you measured. The depth. Of Christ's love. And we can say. In a general sense. That the depth. Of his love.

Reaches. To the deepest. Of sinners. However. We. Conceptualize. That. His love. Has no limit. In that sense.

[38 : 41] The depth. Of it. Reaches. To the. Deepest. Of sinners. Paul. On one occasion. Said that he was. The chief. Of sinners. Chief. And.

I want you to listen. To what Paul wrote. You don't need. To turn to it. But I'll read it. To you. In. First Timothy. Chapter one. Verse thirteen. Listen to what he said here. He wrote.

Although I was. Formerly. A blasphemer. A persecutor. An insolent man. But I obtained mercy. Because I did it.

Ignorantly. And unbelief. And the grace. Of our God. Was exceedingly. Abundant. With faith. And. Love. Which are. In Christ Jesus.

His love. Reaches to the. Depths. I like. Can't think of the title. Of the song right now. By Steve Green. But one line says.

[39 : 35] The deepest. Sin. Can't rise above. Calvary's love. And that is so true. The depth. Of Christ's love. And then have you.

Comprehended. The height. Of Christ's love. The height of it. And I think this speaks of. God's ultimate. And final. Purpose. For us.

In his love. Because see. Salvation is a whole lot more. Than just forgiveness. It's. More than just. Fire insurance. Jesus died. Not only to forgive us.

But to make us good. And he's doing that. Working on that. And we're not going to reach that. In this life. But he died. So that he could make us.

More like himself. To be actually conformed. In the very life of Christ. Jesus died. That we might. Be born again. That we might. Would be made children of God.

[40 : 31] Sons of God. Heirs of God. Joined heirs with Christ. And so forth. And ultimately. To of course. Take us to heaven. Jesus prayed. That awesome prayer. In John 17.

24. Or John 17. But in verse 24. That part of the prayer. He prayed. Father. I will. That they also. Whom you have given me. Be with me. Be with me.

Where I am. That they may. Behold my glory. Apostle John. Really gives us the.

I think. The best description. Of the measurement. Of the height. Of Christ's love. In 1 John 3. 1 and 2. It's one of my favorite passages.

Listen to it. Behold. What. Manner. Of love. The father has bestowed upon us. Bestowed really.

[41 : 27] Is translated. Other. Versions. Of the bible. And I think. Is best translated. Lavished. Behold. Look. Look. It's amazing.

Open your eyes. Look. It's amazing. What manner. The manner of love. The father has. Lavished on us. That. We should be called.

Children of God. Therefore. The world. Does not know us. Because it did not know him. Beloved. Now. We are. Children of God. And it has not yet been.

Revealed. What we shall be. But we know. That when he is revealed. We shall be like him. For we shall see him. As he is. Tremendous passage. The.

The love of God. Measuring the immeasurable. It's width. It's length. It's depth. It's height. And you know.

[42 : 22] It's overwhelming. When you realize. That as believers. We are right in the middle of it. I have told this story before. It's a precious story. Of a father. And his little boy. And they were out in the country.

One day. Just driving. And he. Drove up to the top. Of a really long. Tall hill. There. So that. They could get out of the car. And look around. And it was so high.

That they could see in all directions. And see for miles. In every direction. And his father. Thought. Well I'll just. Take this opportunity. To teach my son. About the love of God. And he said.

Son. Let me tell you. How much God loves you. God loves us. How big that love is. He said. Look out this way. And he pointed north. It's probably not north here.

But. Pointed north. And he said. Look. Look. And then he pointed this way. And then that way. And then. Behind them. And he said. That's. That's how big God's love is for you. And his little boy.

[43 : 19] Very perceptive. He. He said. Dad. Do you know what that means? That means. That means we're right in the middle of it. You see. How wonderful.

To. Apprehend that. This is. This is. Paul's prayer. And how we ought to pray for one another. To apprehend. To really. Lay hold of. The full measure.

Of the love of Christ. Something that we'll never. Fully. Apprehend. Not certainly in this life. I'm not even sure that we'll. Fully apprehend it. We'll spend all of eternity.

Learning. More and more about this. Love of God. To measure the immeasurable. And then one more. To know the unknowable. To know the unknown.

Paul said in verse 19. And to know. The love of Christ. Which passes knowledge. Passes knowledge. Now that's. Clearly. Self-contradictory.

[44 : 20] I mean. To know what is. Past knowing. How could Paul mean that? The word that Paul used here for know. There are a couple of words in the Greek language. One of them pertains to what we would know in our brains.

You know. Increasing the. Our fund of knowledge. Knowledge in our brain. The cognitive. Type of knowledge. But that's not the word he used. The word he used here.

Speaks of experiential knowledge. A knowledge that we experience. Like that new Chevy Camaro. I was talking about earlier. I mean.

First. It's a concept. You know. And I'm able to comprehend it. And then second. I begin to examine it. Size it up. I look at it. And so forth.

And then finally. I want to experience it. You know. Sit in the driver's seat. Smell that interior. Turn the key.

[45 : 18] Fire it up. Get out on the road. And drive it around. And so forth. So I want to experience it. And see. I must experience. The love of Christ.

The fullness of that love. And that is infinitely more true. You know. We're not talking about cars here. We're talking about. The love of God. To go from a.

Conceptual knowledge. To an experiential knowledge. Now. How can we know something. That Paul says. Is past knowing. Even if that knowledge.

Is talking about. An experiential knowledge. If it's past. That experience. And how. And that's contradictory. Well when Paul says. That this love. Is past knowledge.

Literally. He's saying. That it is a. Knowledge. Surpassing love. That's. A literal translation. Of the words. A knowledge. Surpassing love. That is.

[46 : 18] It goes. Beyond. The limits. Of our knowledge. Beyond it. And even as those limits. Expand. And they should.

Expand. As we grow. As believers. Still. God's love. Goes on. And on. It's beyond that. No matter how much. The believer. Experiences.

The love of Christ. There are. Oceans. Of love. In the heart. Of God. That are yet. To be experienced. Like the song.

We sang. Earlier. The third stanza. The love of God. By Frederick. Neiman. Leeman. Excuse me. That third verse. Remember it.

Could we. With. Ink. The ocean. Fill. and were the skies of parchment made, and were every stalk on earth a quill, and every man a scribe by trade.

[47 : 24] Now that's the setup. To write the love of God above would drain the ocean of drought, nor could the scroll contain the whole.

Though stretched from sky to sky. The full knowledge. The knowledge of full love of Christ.