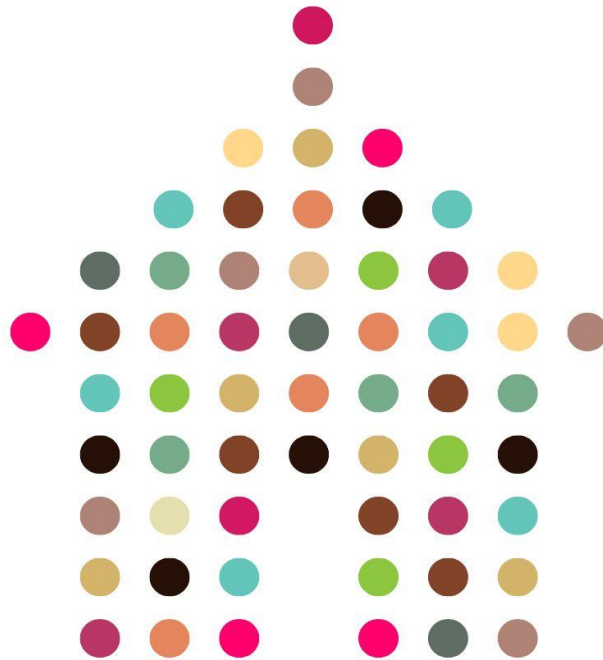




EPHESIANS

We are Jesus' Church

WHAT'S LOVE GOT TO DO WITH IT?

Paul understood “Love” to mean:

1. God’s perpetual, unwavering, committed, lovingkindness, faithfulness, loyalty, and mercy.
2. God’s Hesed or Agape love is the model for how God intended humanity to understand and express love back to Him and us to each other.



When I think of all this, I fall to my knees and pray to the Father, the Creator of everything in heaven and on earth. I pray that from his glorious, unlimited resources he will empower you with inner strength through his Spirit. Then Christ will make his home in your hearts as you trust in him. Your roots will grow down into God's love and keep you strong. And may you have the power to understand, as all God's people should, how wide, how long, how high, and how deep his love is. May you experience the love of Christ, though it is too great to understand fully. Then you will be made complete with all the fullness of life and power that comes from God.

Now all glory to God, who is able, through his mighty power at work within us, to accomplish infinitely more than we might ask or think. Glory to him in the church and in Christ Jesus through all generations forever and ever!

Amen.

-Ephesians 3:14-21 (NLT)

1. Paul is a prisoner in Rome
2. God's grace and peace are for all followers of Jesus who already have every spiritual blessing because of our shared union with Christ
3. God remains eternally committed to His sovereign plan to bring all things together under the authority of Christ, which is an act of grace that gives Him great pleasure.
4. God's plan for humanity is not a desperate "Hail Mary", but an intentional, fully guaranteed plan fulfilled through Christ; and it's a plan that the Holy Spirit seals and empowers for the sake of God's people gathered together.
5. Our perspective on death, suffering, and worldly status change once we fully understand the immense gift of hope in the coming kingdom and our security in God's.
6. Because we are Jesus' body our lives become fulfilling and meaningful when, united with Christ, we carry out his eternal plan bringing his power, presence and truth to others through our unique giftings.

7. The incredible greatness that Paul wants us to understand about God's power is this: out of love, God has restored us to where we belong set right with God and seated with Jesus as living displays of His grace.
8. Through faith in Jesus, we not only become a new creation, we also become a vital part of God's new creation - the Church - a gathered and diverse but unified community created to bring heaven down to earth.
9. Our reconciliation with God is completely bound to our reconciliation with others.
10. Jesus' church must be characterized as a hesed (loving attachment) saturated network where our place is not earned, but is Jesus-led and Spirit-empowered.
11. God has given us an awesome privilege by unveiling his wisdom in and through us.

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that He might give to you according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man, for Christ to dwell in your hearts through faith, (BLB)

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Now all glory to God, who is able through his Spirit to do infinitely more in us and through the church and in Christ Jesus than we can ask or think. Amen.

...having been rooted and having been founded in love, that you may be fully able, with all the saints, to comprehend what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ surpassing knowledge... (BLB)

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INVITATION

Does it take inner strength to receive and be shaped by God's Heseed/Agape love?

Does it take inner strength to love others like God loves?

Take it deeper:
Review each day and take note of any moments you noticed you needed strength to give or receive God's love.