

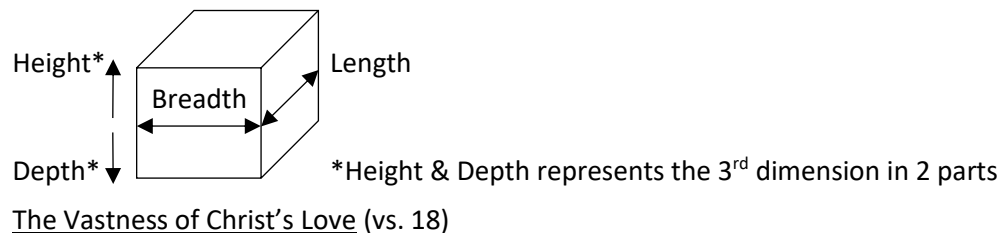
Paul's Prayer to Know & Experience Christ More (Ephesians 3:14-21)

Text Idea: Paul prays that believers might be strengthened by the Spirit's power so that we might: (1) experience the love of Christ more, (2) comprehend the vastness of Christ's love more, and thus, (3) be filled with the fullness of God's glory and character more.

Text Application: We need to replace our vapid prayers with this kind of spiritually and theologically rich prayer for one another.

Text Outline:

- 1) Paul's Posture in Prayer (vss. 14-15)
- 2) Paul's Three-fold Request (vss. 16-19)
 - a) "That" (*hina*) we'd be strengthened to experience the love of Christ more (16-17a)
 - ↳ b) "That" (*hina*) we'd be strengthened to comprehend the love of Christ more (17b-19a)
 - ↳ c) "That" (*hina*) we'd be filled with God's glory and character more (19b)
- 3) Paul's Doxological Ending (vss. 20-21)



Ephesians 3:20:

This is a super-superlative sentence which Paul loves to construct (see also 2 Cor. 4:17) because he can't contain his exuberance over the truth he wishes to convey. The first part reads (in the NASB):

"Now to Him who is able to do far-more-abundantly* beyond all that we ask or think..."

* "far more abundantly" is one adverb (abundantly) in the Greek that uses two prepositional prefixes to add emphasis. It could be translated "super-abundantly."

Note how the sentence can be better understood in breaking it down by stripping off the superlatives to get to the basic verbal action (the infinitive "to do") and then slowly add each superlative back in to show just how excited Paul is about what he is saying:

- 1) Now to Him who is able to do [what] we ask (*aiteo*).
- 2) Now to Him who is able to do all (*panta*) that we ask (*aiteo*).
- 3) Now to Him who is able to do all (*panta*) that we ask (*aiteo*) or **think** (*noeo*).
- 4) Now to Him who is able to do beyond (*huper*) **all** (*panta*) that we ask (*aiteo*) or **think** (*noeo*).
- 5) Now to Him who is able to do abundantly (*perissou*) **beyond** (*huper*) **all** (*panta*) that we ask (*aiteo*) or **think** (*noeo*).
- 6) Now to Him who is able to do more-abundantly (*ek+perissou*) **beyond** (*huper*) **all** (*panta*) that we ask (*aiteo*) or **think** (*noeo*).
- 7) Now to Him who is able to do far-more-abundantly (*huper+ek+perissou*) **beyond** (*huper*) **all** (*panta*) that we ask (*aiteo*) or **think** (*noeo*).