

Praise God Forever

Long Beach Alliance Church • October 12, 2014 • Pastor Chris Lankford

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.
~Ephesians 3:20-21 (ESV)

1) Doxology of Praise to God

- A) A “doxology” is a ‘hopeful prayer’ on behalf of others; an exaltation and appreciation for God which celebrates His character or attributes (Ephesians 3:20-21; see also Numbers 6:24-26; 1 Chronicles 29:11-13; Psalm 67:1-2; Romans 15:5-6, 13, 16:25-27; 1 Corinthians 15:58; Philippians 4:7; 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24; 1 Timothy 1:17; Hebrews 13:20-21).
- B) The triumphant doxology which concludes the Apostle Paul’s prayer for the Ephesians flows from the pointed assertion that all of God’s family have “boldness and access with confidence” because of faith in Christ (Ephesians 3:12). Christ provides access, we are bold in Him!
- C) Paul’s prayer begins on His knees in an attitude and posture of submission, but builds to an extravagant level of ‘lavishly rich’ requests which ‘exceed comprehension,’ ‘surpass knowledge,’ and result in being ‘filled with all the fullness’ of God’s strengthening Spirit (3:16-19).
- D) Paul’s prayer is humble and submissive (3:14-19), but also bold and demanding. His prayer serves as a practical example of the types of requests and appeals which ought to be made by those who have obtained ‘boldness and confident access’ through faith in Christ.

- E) It's no shock the focus of the doxology exalts God's incomparable power and ability to accomplish exceedingly great things (3:20-21)! This is a triumphant celebration of God's divine power, displayed in His people by means of submission in faith to Jesus Christ.

2) God's Power in Manifold Display

- A) God's power is revealed in three 'plain' phrases in this short two-verse doxology. First in the phrase "able to do," and then twice in the phrase "the power at work..." (3:20).
- B) In English, "able to do" sounds pedestrian, and not very powerful. However, in the original language, the writer uses a form of the word 'power' ("dunamis," from which English derives 'dynamite').
- C) When positioned before the very rare 'double-double' construction "far more abundantly," the overall concept conveys "the highest form of comparison imaginable." God's ability is powerful beyond every possible comparison, truly above-and-beyond our wildest imagination!
- D) Once again, "the power at work" begins with the same "power" word ('dunamis,' but a noun this time) as earlier, but it is then made "alive" (cf. 1:20!) by the phrase "at work" ("energon," from which English derives "energy" or "energize"). God's infinite power energized!
- E) The life-restoring, life-giving, life-resurrecting, life-redeeming power which raised Christ from death to life is at work in us (3:20, cf. Romans 8:11)! God's power is limitless to deliver on His promises (1:3-14)!

3) Reflecting God's Power for a Googolplexian of Years

- A) Is it any wonder Paul explodes in celebrating God's magnificent glory in light of His incomparable power (3:21)?! God deserves our praise because of His essential attributes which reveal His perfect character!
- B) Did you note the plural "us" (3:20)? Shockingly, Paul notes the glory of God is revealed "in the church" *foremost* (3:21). We are the us! In this world, the church is "Christ's body" (cf. 1 Corinthians 12:13 & 27), the instrument through which God's manifold wisdom and glory is revealed!
- C) As the church is in union "in Christ Jesus," supernatural forces are defeated and powerless (3:10), Gospel power provides new life for the spiritually dead (2:1-10), and the church is a mobilized reconciling force expanding God's glory and love for an endless eternity (3:21). AMEN!



Take It Home!

How can we live out these ideas from the Bible?



Describe a time when God did “far more abundantly” than you asked for or expected. How did this impact you?



How can you, as a unique part of the church, give God glory?

Take It Further!

Want to study more? Read here outside group time



Read Romans 16:25-27 and 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24. How are these prayers like Paul’s in Ephesians 3:20-21? How are they different? How are they like or unlike your prayers for others?