

# Easy As 1-2-3



## Ephesians 3:14-21<sup>1</sup>

### It's As Easy As 1-2-3

Select where you would like to begin and enjoy!

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## Overall Understanding

As Paul finishes up the first three chapters, which are acutely doctrinal, he prays again for them, ending in one of the most exuberant declarations of God's power to answer our prayers and meet our needs beyond what we can imagine. At the end of this chapter, there is a link to lyrics for a song I wrote inspired by the last verse.

## Ephesians 3:14-21<sup>2</sup>

For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,<sup>15</sup> from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, <sup>16</sup>that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man,

*Because of what Paul had just written—because of all He did for us, and because His death opened up salvation to the Greeks and made both Jews and Greeks one body, he prays. Bending the knees to pray suggests it was a most earnest prayer.*

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The riches of His glory is all that He is and all the glories of what He possesses, and all the glories of what He accomplished on calvary for us.

“To be strengthened with might” means empowered with miraculous power. Wuest writes:

*Thus, “empowered with miraculous power.” The purpose of the strengthening by the Spirit is now given, “that Christ may dwell in your hearts.” The personal presence of the Lord Jesus in the heart of the believer is not in view here. That is taken for granted. The word “dwell” is katoikēsai, made up of oikeō, “to live in as a home,” and Kata, “down,” thus “to settle down and be at home.” The tense is aorist, showing finality.*

The Amplified Bible puts it this way:

*May He grant you out of the rich treasury of His glory to be strengthened and reinforced with mighty power in the inner man by the [Holy] Spirit [Himself indwelling your innermost being and personality].*

<sup>17</sup> that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith:

May Christians seek to get “closer to God” through a variety of religious exercises, but Christ dwells in our hearts through faith in Him. It is the only thing we do that contributes in any way, and that is to believe. As Wuest points out above, the Greek language expresses this dwelling as a final completed fact. Christ dwells in us, not because of what we do, but by His unlimited power.

that you, being rooted and grounded in love,

Rooted and grounded carries the idea of becoming permanently settled.

“In love” here can only refer to God’s love for us. Our love for God is nothing we should put our faith in as it fails, but His love for us is steadfast and never fails.

<sup>18</sup> may be able to comprehend with all the saints what *is* the width and length and depth and height—

“Able” means to have the power. “Able” is *exischuō*, “to be eminently able, to have full strength.”-Wuest

“To comprehend” means to grasp, to apprehend.

*“Comprehend” is katalambanō. The word “comprehend” conveys to the English reader the idea of “understand.” The Greek word means “to lay hold of so as to make one’s own, to seize, take possession of.”-Wuest*

Paul prays that the saints in Ephesus (and we) would have full strength/power to lay hold of the width and length and depth and height of God’s love. This suggests infinity in all directions.

<sup>19</sup> to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge;

The word “to know” here is different than the “know” (grasp, apprehend) above.

*The words “to know” are the translation of ginōskō which speaks of knowledge gained by experience. The apprehension of verse 18 is conceptual knowledge. In verse 19, this conceptual knowledge passes into experiential knowledge as the saint experiences in his life that comprehension of the love of Christ for him in the sphere of his earthly life.-Wuest*

“Passes” knowledge: *huperballō*; to throw beyond the usual mark, that is, (figuratively) to surpass) exceeding, excel, pass.

that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

When we understand God’s unending love for us, when we are rooted and grounded in it, we are filled with all of His fullness. So, perhaps instead of seeking God by endless disciplines, we should seek to understand and believe in His love for us.

<sup>20</sup> 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, <sup>21</sup> to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

One might reasonably answer this verse dubiously, for most of us can think of great things that God could do for us. Think of the most incredible and then recognize that He can do more.

How is this possible? Is it through us grunting and groaning in prayer? No. It is by the power that is at work in us. It is that same power that raised Jesus from the dead. (See Ephesians 1.)

[Click Here: "So Much More" by C. D. Hildebrand, lyrics to a song inspired by Ephesians 3:20](#)

## *Coming Up in Chapter 4*

In chapters 4-6, Paul will describe how chapters 1-3 permeate our lives. Often, chapters 4-6 are taught without the context of the first three chapters, which can lead to legalism.