

## Message for July 12, 2020

*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, to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen. --*  
- Ephesians 3:20-21

The passage above is often spoken as a benediction at the end of a church worship service. It is twice addressed "to Him", meaning God the Father. Let's look at each "to Him" separately, beginning with the second one. Here we, the church, are to ascribe glory to God in the name of Jesus for as long as we live, including on into eternity. To all generations means we are to pass on to our children, and other believers who come after us, the desire, tradition, and joy of thanking and praising God. When we thank and praise Him we are glorifying God in the church. So a reasonable question might be: How much are we glorifying God within our church, regardless of whether or not we are actually meeting together in a regular service? Remember, each one of us *is* the church. Do we have a daily "habit" of being thankful and offering praises, or is glorifying God only a Sunday thing? Is it based on spending time daily in prayer and meditation, seeking His presence and will in our lives? And do we offer these thanks and praises from a truly joyful heart, or do we simply go through the motions, as in performing a ritual? Each of us needs to examine ourselves to ensure that we have the right attitude and are indeed drawing nearer to God, rather than growing more distant. Making a "habit" of offering heartfelt thanks and praises to God is the way to ensure this closeness to Him.

Now let's look at the first "to Him", which gives us a reason to glorify God. Think for a moment, what is the greatest thing that you can imagine, or possibly ask of God? A divine healing, a peaceful nation, salvation for a loved one, or some other huge miracle? Think big, really big! Well, the quoted passage says that God can do more than that. Not only more, but abundantly more, meaning *much* more. And not only abundantly more, but *exceedingly* abundantly more, meaning way, way beyond even my wildest dreams! And how is He able to do any of that? By the power that works in us. Think about that for a moment. We can't measure the vastness of our universe, or understand all of its complexities, from the microscopic to the enormously gigantic, yet how was it created? By the power of the Holy Spirit. The same Holy Spirit who dwells within each of us. We may not always feel the power, but it's

there, available according to the will of God, and able to perform any miracle that He chooses. Why don't we see more of those types of wondrous miracles that we read about in the Bible? It's all in our thinking and asking. Ponder these Scriptures:

Yet you do not have because you do not ask. You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend it on your pleasures. ---  
James 4:2b-3

Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him. --- I John 5:14-15

From these Scriptures (and there are others that could be referenced) we see how important it is to know what the will of God is. *Anything* we ask according to His will, no matter how great (or small), will be granted. So how do we determine His will so that we can pray out these miracles? It's not a shot in the dark, or hit or miss approach, hoping that we hit the bull's eye. God will reveal His will to us as we deliberately spend time with Him in prayer, seeking His presence and yielding our own will and desires to conform to His. We can then confidently ask, by faith knowing that He will answer accordingly. And when He does, we have ample reason to glorify Him through our thanksgivings and praises.

What's the bottom line? Seek God and His will daily. Don't hesitate to think big, even enormously as He responds to you over time! He *wants* to do great things for you and through you; that's why we have these Scriptures. He is a great God who deserves our worship, and who does great things for those who believe. Are you a believer?

Glorious blessings,

Pastor Joe

*For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong on behalf of those whose heart is loyal to Him. --- 2*  
Chronicles 16:9a

## THE ROLE OF A LIFETIME



We grow up when we see our life and our role from God's perspective; when we thank God for the role he has assigned us and begin to see our cup as a gift instead of a cross; when each morning we ask, "God, how can I glorify you today in my given role?"

—Linda Dillow, *Calm My Anxious Heart*

## THE SURPASSING GRACE

The word "surpass" means to exceed, to go beyond, to transcend the reach or capacity of. In his second letter to the church at Corinth, St. Paul refers to "the surpassing grace of God that he has given you" (2 Corinthians 9:14, NRSV). Paul was reminding the Corinthians of the amazing, abundant grace God had showered upon them.

When Paul wrote that letter, the church in Jerusalem was suffering intense persecution. The members were poor and struggling to be faithful under dire circumstances.

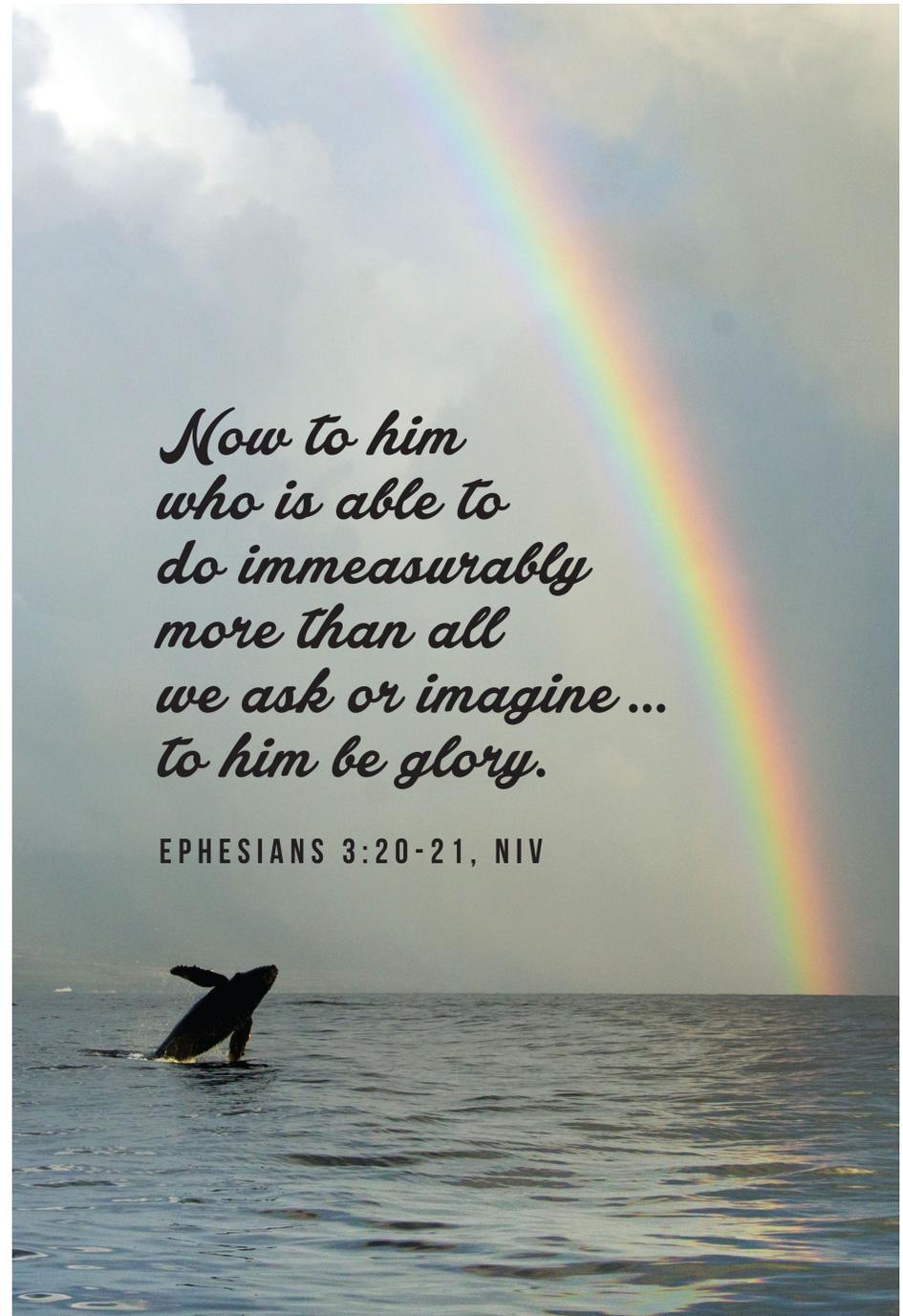
Paul knew the church at Corinth was doing fine financially and that they had a mind to help out the Jerusalem church. He wrote: "You glorify God ... by the generosity of your sharing with them and with all others, while they ... pray for you because of the surpassing grace of God that he has given you" (2 Corinthians 9:13-14, NRSV).

Consider how you can share God's surpassing grace with others in need.

## A GOOD START

He who fritters away the early morning, its opportunity and freshness, in other pursuits than seeking God will make poor headway seeking him the rest of the day. If God is not first in our thoughts and efforts in the morning, he will be in the last place the remainder of the day.

—E.M. Bounds



*Now to him  
who is able to  
do immeasurably  
more than all  
we ask or imagine ...  
To him be glory.*

EPHESIANS 3:20-21, NIV

**"The Little Church That Could"**  
*"Believing is Seeing"*