

MORE THAN ALL

Ephesians 3:20-21

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.

1/More than all

Here is a great affirmation of the power of God toward us. This is an extraordinary expression of glory and praise to God. May our faith be lifted as we consider this text today

2/The power of God

- God is able to do all
- God is able to do more than all
- God is able to do far more abundantly than all
- God is able to do far more abundantly than all we ask
- God is able to do far more abundantly than all we ask or think

Huperekperisso = more than, overflow or abound

- NIV = immeasurably more
- NRSV = abundantly far more
- NKJV = Exceedingly abundantly above
- Message = Far more than your wildest dreams
- Rienecker = beyond all measure; superabundantly; 'the highest form of comparison imaginable'
- Perschbacher = superabound

See John 16:24; Psalm 2:8. Jesus encourages us to think big!

3/More than all we can ask or think

'Think' = reason, conceive, imagine. What dreams can we dream? What great things can we imagine? God can do far more abundantly above anything we can conceive!

- 'Let your dreams, not your regrets control your life' – Denise, a Tabor student
- 'Attempt something so great it will fail unless God is in it' – John Haggai
- 'Ships in a harbour are safe, but that is not what ships are made for' – anon
- God loves with a great love those whose hearts are bursting with a passion for the impossible' – William Booth
- 'You do not test the resources of God until you attempt the impossible' – F B Meyer

4/Two qualifications

There are two qualifications to this great promise. Neither of them allows us to think in self-centred or selfish terms...

Qualification #1

'According to the power at work within us.' This is the power of the Holy Spirit.

- *Dunamis* = power, ability
- *Energeo* = work, effect, be active

Both words are commonly associated with the work of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit's power enables us—

- To witness (Luke 24:49; Act 1:8)

- To bear good fruit (Galatians 5:22,23)
- To exercise spiritual gifts (1 Cor 12:7-11)
- To persevere (Colossians 1:11)
- To serve the Lord effectively (Col 1:29)

It is vitally important to be filled with the Holy Spirit. The extent of the working of God's power in our lives is directly related to the presence of the Holy Spirit. Question: Whose responsibility is it for us to be Spirit-filled? See Ephesians 5:18

Qualification #2

'To him be glory...'

Whatever we ask for must be for the glory of God. See James 4:3

God is glorified –

- In the church: our prayers are best realised through the people of God
- In Christ Jesus: when we pray through Jesus, we cannot help but glorify the Father

So what kind of things can we dream about, conceive of, or imagine...?

What can we ask God for in our church? What 'impossible' things could God do for us as a church that would really glorify Him?

- William Carey – 'Expect great things; attempt great things'
- 'When we step out (in faith), God steps in (with power)!

Let's be bold to ask great things from the God who can do far more abundantly above all we can ask or imagine.

SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT

Read: Ephesians 3:20,21

1. What kind of God is portrayed here? (20).
2. What are some great and mighty things you can think of that you could ask the Lord for? Think carefully and then make a list.
3. What do you think the phrase 'according to the power that is at work within us' means? (20) Can God be limited by the degree to which the Spirit's power is at work in our lives? If so, how?
4. How can we experience the power of the Holy Spirit in our lives? Luke 11:11-13; 24:49; Acts 1:8; 8:15-17; 19:1-6 might help you here.
5. If we want glory to be given to God how will this affect our praying? (21)
6. Why do you think Paul says 'glory in the church'? What is different about God being glorified in the church and being glorified in our individual lives? (21)
7. What are some practical ways in which God can be glorified in *our* church?
8. Think again about great and mighty things you could pray for. Has your list changed since looking at the other questions?
9. Pray together.

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