

Ephesians 3:14-19

Paul's Prayer

This is a prayer that Paul offers for the Ephesians

He kneels – unusual as people commonly stood to pray (Mark 11:25; John 17:1)

When we pray for our church, what do we pray for?

Paul prays to the Father. Every family (patria) on heaven on earth derives its name from the Father (pater). Fatherhood is an essential ingredient of family life

1/Strengthened with power

- Strengthened = made strong, mighty cf Eph 1:19)
- With power = dunamis
- Inner being = spirit/soul
- By God's Spirit. See Luke 24:49; Acts 1:8. Only a Spirit-filled Church can achieve God's purpose!

2/Christ in our hearts

- Christ = Messiah, Anointed One
- Dwell = dwell permanently, inhabit, be at home
- By faith = reliance, trust
- Hearts = centre of affection

3/The love of Christ

- Rooted = like a plant
- Grounded = like a building
- Love = unconditional love (agape)

God wants us to be established in his love—firm and secure

3/The love of Christ

- Have strength = be fully able. We cannot comprehend Christ's love without divine enablement
- With all the saints (holy ones – believers? angels?) = we are not alone
- Comprehend = make one's own; lay hold of
- Dimensions = vastness (of love?)
- Know = know personally, experientially
- Passes knowledge = immeasurable (huperballo – lit. to throw beyond limits)
- *Paul prays that we will know the unknowable!*
- Only by experience—cf a mother's love for her child

5/The fullness of God

- Fill = fill!
- All = all!
- Fullness = Gnostic term for all the gods and deities in the Gnostic system. In other words, all that can be called god is found in Christ.

Astonishing concept: How can we be filled with all the fullness of God? Not that all of God is in us. But what we have is all God—complete, nothing lacking

Read Ephesians 3:14-19

If you were praying for a group of friends in a local church, what sort of things would you pray for? When you have thought/talked about this, see what Paul asks God to do for his friends in Ephesus (14-19). How do the lists compare?

What aspects of family life derive their meaning or significance from our heavenly Father? (14). There is plenty to come up with here. Think about the attributes of God and how they relate to family life.

What do you think is meant by the phrase ‘riches of His glory’? What is the nature of these riches? Give as many examples as possible. What does ‘of His glory’ mean? Why doesn’t Paul say something like ‘of heaven’ or ‘of His wealth’?

What kind of power does the Spirit bring to our lives? Make a list, with Scripture references if possible. (For some examples see Luke 24:49; Acts 1:8; Acts 4:33; 8:13; Colossians 1:11, 12; 2 Corinthians 12:9, 10.)

Can you share experiences of the power of the Spirit in your life?

What do you think Paul is referring to in verse 18? Why?

If Christ’s love ‘surpasses knowledge’ in what sense can we know it? (19)

How can we be filled with ALL the fullness of God? (19) See Ephesians 5:18.

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