



#6 Prayers for the People [Ephesians 3:14-21]

Paul's Prayer in Chapter 3

¹⁴ For this reason I kneel before the Father, ¹⁵ from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name. ¹⁶ I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, ¹⁷ so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, ¹⁸ may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, ¹⁹ and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

²⁰ Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, ²¹ to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.

Paul's Prayer in Chapter 1

¹⁵ For this reason, because I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, ¹⁶ I do not cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers, ¹⁷ that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him, ¹⁸ having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, ¹⁹ and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the working of his great might ²⁰ that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, ²¹ far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. ²² And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, ²³ which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

For this reason I kneel before the Father...

What's the reason Paul is kneeling before the Father?

To get to that, we have to back track. Because verse 14 is Paul getting back on track with a thought of his. Let's look at verse. 1 of chapter 3.

For this reason, I Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles.

Paul goes on a tangent after that, which you can learn about from Shaun's sermon last week.

So Paul here's concluding something, and that conclusion is the reason for Paul's prayer.

Paul has 2 great prayers in Ephesians:

Chapter 3:14-21 which we just read

Chapter 1:15-23

WHAT IS PAUL'S REASON? All of chapters 1 and 2!

Ephesians can be split into 2 parts. There are 6 chapters in Ephesians and it's divided neatly in half: Part 1 is chapters 1-3. And Part 2 is Chapters 4-6.

This is the conclusion of Part 1.

All of chapter 1 and 2 are about Paul's calling to share the work of Christ's life, teaching, death and resurrection to all people

He believes in this so much that he's been imprisoned for it.

And that because God is bringing everyone into the family of God, we take up his calling originally to the jews. That people would know God because of us! That people would experience God through us!

[Story of Bethel Community](#)

Some of you might be thinking- That's NOT me.

I would challenge you to this morning and say, that is you.

That's what God is doing. You are God's plan for reconciling all things back to him.

How AM I GOING TO BE THAT?!

For this reason I pray.

Paul prays 2 prayers in this section of Ephesians. Chapter 1 and chapter 3.

It's for THIS reason he prays these two prayers. This is Paul's prayer for you. He believes that this is what God has in store for you, so he prays these prayers.

Prayer 1 is in chapter 1: 15-23

Prayer 1 can be summarized in that Paul wants believers to KNOW 3 things:

May give you the spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him

What are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints

What is the surpassing greatness of his power toward us who believe...

About power- we have this idea of power as "I can do anything I want." That's not really what Paul is getting at. And he clarifies this right away.

This power looks like Jesus. This is very different from the earthly view of power.

It is not the power that stops every bad thing, that heals every disease, that doesn't allow for any problems. We don't see that in Jesus' life. He dies!

But there is this deeper power that exists in God that we have access to.

It's the power that gives up status and authority, the power to turn the other cheek when someone strikes you, it's the power to respond in love to those who disagree and hate you, it's powerful enough to take sin and forgive it

That even when we die, which we will, we have the power of Christ, who can bring breath life into us. Death does not have the final say.

We have access to this power

Pauls' 2nd prayer:

This is the great crescendo. This is the exclamation point.

This is my prayer for you all today. My prayer is that you would experience this today.

Even if you are not a Christian today, you have probably heard that "God loves you"

That's not new information.

And it wasn't news to the Ephesians.

Pauls prayer is not that we would know that God loves, it's that we would know

HOW MUCH GOD LOVES US

[Blaise Pascal's night of fire](#)

NOTHING IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN KNOWING AND EXPERIENCING THIS.

Paul doesn't pray for circumstances, but for God' outpouring of love. For it is His love that will get us through any circumstance.

So let's pray for this.

LIFE GROUP QUESTIONS

1. What aspect of Paul's prayers stood out to you?
2. What of Paul's prayers:
 - a. Did you find most encouraging?
 - b. Do you want to experience more of in your life?
3. Which of the prayer prompts were you led to pray into?
 - a. Did you hear from God? What did he say?
4. What does it look like for someone to be filled with the fullness of God?
5. Pray as a group that you'd continue to know more of and experience the breadth, length, height, and depth of God's love.

Further Resources:

[Tim Mackie sermon "Prayer for Power"](#)

[Don Carson sermon "Ephesians 3:14-21"](#)

[Tim Keller sermon "The Power of the Spirit"](#)

Send questions to jonathan@waipunachapel.com