

PAUL'S PRAYER FOR THE EPHESIANS AND FOR US

Ephesians 3:14-21

Background

- Paul the Apostle was in prison when he wrote this letter to the Ephesians
 - EXTREMELY difficult circumstances – no electronic devices - no TV, refrigerators, fans, AC, NO video games!
- vs 13 ask them to NOT be discouraged because of his suffering for them
 - Paul did not feel sorry for himself in his difficult situation but used it to an advantage – to write letters that became the bible!

IN DIFFICULT TIMES, REALIZE GOD HAS 1) A REASON FOR IT 2) WORK FOR YOU TO DO IN IT

14 For this reason I kneel before the Father,

Posture in prayer - Standing (Genesis 24:12-14)

- Lifting the hands (1 Timothy 2:8) • Sitting (Judges 20:26) • Kneeling (Mark 1:40)
- Looking upward (John 17:1) • Bowing down (Exodus 34:8) • Placing the head between the knees (1 Kings 18:42) • Pounding on the breast (Luke 18:13) • Facing the temple (Daniel 6:10)

All posture is acceptable because we are called to “pray without ceasing” 1 Thess 5:17

15 from whom his whole family in heaven and on earth derives its name.

We are part of God's family – His sons and daughters – and we carry His name!

- As God's kids we can ask for things - *If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him!* Mt 7:11

16 I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being,

Our God is RICH! He owns EVERYTHING –

- Did Paul pray for physical blessings for the believers? NO....why not? Because Jesus taught **15** *"Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; a man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions."* Lk 12
- It is what is on the inside that is important...**22** *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,* **23** *gentleness and self-control.* Gal 5:22,23

17 so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith.....

By FAITH, Christ dwells in our hearts

- **9** For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form, **10** and you have been given fullness in Christ.... Col 2:9,10
- According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him....2 Pet 1:3

17...And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, 18 may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ,

How great is the Love of Christ?

- While we were still sinners Christ died for us Rom 5:8
- We were dead in our sins but he has made us alive! Eph 2:4,5
- Cast all your cares on Him because he cares for you 1 Pet 5:6,7
- He calls us his children and heirs 1 Jn 3:1, Rom 8:17
- All the promises of God are YES and AMEN in Christ! 2 Cor 1:20

19 and to know this love that surpasses knowledge--that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

What does it mean that His Love Surpasses knowledge?

- Sometimes the circumstances in our lives cloud the reality of God's love – that's why we need to know what the bible says and that's why Paul prayed that we would know His love – so we can be filled with God even in the midst of the circumstances
- Remember Paul wrote this from PRISON!!

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.

GOD IS LARGE AND IN CHARGE

- HE can do anything...way beyond what we can even imagine!
- HE wants to GLORIFY himself through the church – He wants to use us to do amazing things
- Don't be discouraged when things don't go exactly as you plan....seek God and yield to HIS plan

Remember..... GOD LOVES YOU,

YOU ARE HIS CHILD,

put your hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. 1 Tim 6:17