

Take It Home

Applying the Preached Word



A Reason To Bow Your Knees

Text: Ephesians 3:14-21

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Main Point

The prayers of Scripture help us by providing inspiration, content and encouragement for our prayers.

Key Ideas

Paul's prayer here contains three specific requests:

1. Father, strengthen us with your power (16). This power is:
 - According to the riches of His grace. This means that He and His strength are more glorious than we are weak.
 - Through His Spirit, this means that we all need more of the Spirit.
 - In your inner being, this is inner strength not political or physical or cultural. We should pray for people's inner being more than their outer one, and we should pour more effort and energy into our own inner man than the outer.
 - That Christ may dwell in your heart, we need more of Christ—individually and congregationally.
2. Father, help us to know the love of Christ (17).
 - His love for us explodes our categories of knowledge, calling us to know what we cannot know!
 - We Christians simply do not comprehend how much Jesus loves us, but we can get a view of it by surveying the wondrous cross—Eph. 5:25; Rom. 5:8; 2 Cor. 5:14; Gal. 2:20; 1 John 4:10
 - When you treasure Christ it drives out sin and a love of the world
3. Father, fill us with all the fullness of God (19)
 - Fullness refers to maturity in Christ (4:13).
 - The logic of the passage shows us that to grow in maturity we need a growing knowledge of the love of Christ

The doxology of verses 20, 21 is calculated to combat doubt in praying these requests. Do not underestimate the ability of God to do what you ask—and more!

Fellowship Starters

Treasure - Application to stir our love for Christ?

1. Read and/or sing the song, Here Is Love, reflecting with humble joy on its words:

Here is love, vast as the ocean,
Lovingkindness as the flood,
When the Prince of Life, our Ransom,
Shed for us His precious blood.
Who His love will not remember?
Who can cease to sing His praise?
He can never be forgotten,
Throughout Heav'n's eternal days.
On the mount of crucifixion,
Fountains opened deep and wide;
Through the floodgates of God's mercy
Flowed a vast and gracious tide.
Grace and love, like mighty rivers,
Poured incessant from above,
And Heav'n's peace and perfect justice
Kissed a guilty world in love.
Let me all Thy love accepting,
Love Thee, ever all my days;
Let me seek Thy kingdom only
And my life be to Thy praise;
Thou alone shalt be my glory,
Nothing in the world I see.
Thou hast cleansed and sanctified me,
Thou Thyself hast set me free.
In Thy truth Thou dost direct me
By Thy Spirit through Thy Word;
And Thy grace my need is meeting,
As I trust in Thee, my Lord.
Of Thy fullness Thou art pouring
Thy great love and power on me,
Without measure, full and boundless,
Drawing out my heart to Thee.

2. Share specific ways that the three requests talked about in this message have been answered in your life.
3. Share how you can see that they have been answered in the lives of those in your group.

Grow - Application to stir our obedience to Christ

4. Pray Ephesians 3:14-21 every day this week.
5. Find other prayers of Paul (a good place to start is in the first chapters of his letters) and start reflecting on what he prayed for and how he prayed. See what you can

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apply to your life.

6. What do you think of the idea that treasuring Christ drives out sin and a love of the world? Have you found this to be true? What are specific instances of this wonderful work?

Proclaim - Application to stir our witness for Christ

7. How do you think your own growing in understanding of Christ's love for you might affect your witness?
8. Reverse the question: how do you think your witness might affect your understanding of the love of Christ?