

Series: The Wealth of Christ the Walk of the Christian

FOR THIS CAUSE I BOW MY KNEE

EPHESIANS 3:14-15

Text: Ephesians 3:14

Ephesians 3:14

¹⁴ *For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,*

Introduction:

If you are a praying person, you know the difficulties associated with prayer. The flesh hates to pray! Not only that, but the mind is easily distracted during prayer. Have you ever stopped to pray and started off well and then got sidetracked, thinking about matters that are not even remotely connected with your prayers?

It seems Paul had this issue as well. He started to pray back in verse 1, and then he became sidetracked and spent the next twelve verses describing the “mystery” of the church.

In the verses we just read, Paul returns to the matter of prayer. This chapter has shown us various facets of the life of the Apostle Paul. We see Paul The Prisoner in verse 1. We see Paul The Pioneer in verses 2-6. We see

Paul The Preacher in verses 7-13. In these verses we see Paul The Prayer Warrior.

I want us to look this evening at how Paul prayed for the people in Ephesus.

I want us to see the petitions Paul makes for the church. I want us to see the lessons Paul teaches us about prayer in this passage. Let Paul's prayer encourage us, because it is a prayer that has been answered. Let Paul's prayer influence us, because it is how the Lord intends for us to pray for others.

Notice:

1. PAUL'S PASSION IN HIS PRAYER (VS. 14)

Ephesians 3:14

¹⁴ ***For this cause*** *I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,*

As Paul begins his prayer for the saints, he says "for this cause." The word "cause" means, "reason, or from the pleasure of." Paul is speaking of the words he has just shared with the church. He is referring to the great truths revealed all the way from Eph. 1:1 to 3:13.

When we stop to consider everything the Lord has done for us to save us and to change our lives, it should motivate us to go to Him in prayer.

If God loved us so much that He sent His Son to die for our sins, then saved us by His grace and adopted us into His family, we should have a desire to spend time with a God like that.

Our love for the Lord ought to manifest itself in a passionate desire to come into the presence of the Lord to spend time with Him in prayer.

Our passion for Him should drive us to Him.

Remember:

- Prayer is a Command

Luke 18:1

¹ And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint;

1 Thessalonians 5:17

¹⁷ Pray without ceasing.

- Prayer is a Duty

1 Timothy 2:1-4

¹ I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; ² For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. ³ For this is good and

acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; ⁴ Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.

- Prayer is a Gift

Hebrews 4:15-16

¹⁵ For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

- Prayer is a Privilege

Philippians 4:6-7

⁶ Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. ⁷ And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

Prayer Has Promises

Jeremiah 33:3

³ Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and shew thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not.

Isaiah 65:24

²⁴ *And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear.*

John 16:13

¹³ *Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.*

We must make prayer a priority in our lives. We have much to pray about, and we have a God Who invites us to come to Him in prayer. We should humble ourselves before the Lord and ask Him to help us make prayer a passion in our lives.

Note not only Paul's Passion in Prayer, but also:

2. PAUL'S POSTURE IN PRAYER (VS. 14)

Ephesians 3:14

¹⁴ *For this cause **I bow my knees** unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,*

When Paul considered these things, the power of them literally brought him to his knees. He says, "for this cause, I bow me knees." Bowing the knees to pray is common for us, but for a man of Paul's heritage, it would have been quite uncommon.

Typically, the Jews would stand when they prayed. Their arms slightly raised, with the palms turned toward Heaven. If you have ever seen images of the Jews praying at the Western Wall in Jerusalem, you know what I am talking about.

To bow in prayer in that day was very uncommon.

It is interesting that the Bible records several different postures that people took when they prayed.

- Abraham stood – Gen. 18:22b-23

Genesis 18:22-23

²² *And the men turned their faces from thence, and went toward Sodom: but **Abraham stood yet before the LORD.*** ²³ *And Abraham drew near, and said, Wilt thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked?*

- David sat – 1 Chron. 17:16

1 Chronicles 17:16

¹⁶ *And David the king came and **sat before the LORD,** and said, Who am I, O LORD God, and what is mine house, that thou hast brought me hitherto?*

- The Lord stretched out face to the ground – Matthew 26:39

Matthew 26:39

³⁹ And he went a little further, and **fell on his face**, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt.

- Ezra, Daniel, Paul, and Solomon knelt

Ezra 9:5-6

⁵ And at the evening sacrifice I arose up from my heaviness; and having rent my garment and my mantle, **I fell upon my knees**, and spread out my hands unto the LORD my God, ⁶ And said, O my God, I am ashamed and blush to lift up my face to thee, my God: for our iniquities are increased over our head, and our trespass is grown up unto the heavens.

Daniel 6:10

¹⁰ Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house; and his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, **he kneeled upon his knees** three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime.

Acts 20:36

³⁶ And when he had thus spoken, **he kneeled down**, and prayed with them all.

2 Chronicles 6:13-14

¹³ For Solomon had made a brasen scaffold, of five

*cubits long, and five cubits broad, and three cubits high, and had set it in the midst of the court: and upon it he stood, and **kneeled down upon his knees** before all the congregation of Israel, and spread forth his hands toward heaven,¹⁴ And said, O LORD God of Israel, there is no God like thee in the heaven, nor in the earth; which keepest covenant, and shewest mercy unto thy servants, that walk before thee with all their hearts:*

What matter most is not our posture of our body when praying, but rather the posture of our heart.

What matter most is not the posture of our body when praying but rather we practice or participate in praying.

Note not only the Passion and Posture of Paul's Prayer but also:

3. PAUL'S PURPOSE IN HIS PRAYER (VS. 14-15)

Ephesians 3:14-15

¹⁴ *For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,* ¹⁵ *Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named,*

Paul's purpose was to glorify the Father and to edify the church.

Close:

Prayer is extremely important. Let me close with a story about the power of prayer in the life of a church. Dr. J. Wilbur Chapman was called, as a young man, to become pastor of a large church in Philadelphia.

After his first sermon, an old gentleman said to him, "You're pretty young to be pastor of this church. But you preach the Gospel, and I'm going to help you all I can."

Dr. Chapman thought, "Here's a crank."

But the man continued: "I'm going to pray for you that you may have the Holy Spirit's power upon you. Two others have covenanted to join with me in prayer for you."

Dr. Chapman said, "I didn't feel so bad when I learned he was going to pray for me. The 3 became 10, the 10 became 20, and 20 became 50, the 50 became 200 who met before every service to pray that the Holy Spirit might come upon me. I always went into my pulpit feeling that I would have the anointing in answer to the prayers of those who had faithfully prayed for me. It was a joy to preach! The result was that we received 1,100 into our church by conversion in three years, 600 of whom were men. It was the fruit of the Holy spirit in answer to prayer!"