

STUDY SIX | EPHESIANS 3:14-21

RENEWED

Prayer

In this part of the letter we see the Apostle Paul's incredible heart for prayer. He begins a prayer in v.16 that is full of joy and hope. It is also a prayer that is incredibly bold and ambitious. Importantly he gives us a model of what it looks like to pray for each other and to pray for our church and other churches. God our Heavenly Father is concerned about the smallest details of our daily needs but sometimes this can be an excuse for us to focus on trivial things. We can quite easily read Paul's magnificent prayer and then pray for the everyday things of kids at school and colds to get better. If we could learn to pray like Paul we would be more likely to witness God answering our prayers. The truth is that God cares more about our kids and grandkids becoming a fit dwelling for the Holy Spirit than about how they do in the HSC.

'For this reason'

In v. 14, Paul resumes his letter where he broke off in v.1. He is praying that 'for this reason' – in light of all the blessings in Christ that we saw in chapter 1, in light of God's great plan laid out in 1:10, and unpacked more fully in 3:2-13, and in light of God's great grace in bringing us from death to life, and from exclusion from his people into his church which we saw in chapter 2.

Family or Father?

In v. 15 the NIV translates the word as 'family' with a footnote that it is also possible to be 'father'. The key is that Paul is conscious of who he is praying to and so we can think of it this way: "the Father, from whom every family [all fatherhood] in heaven and on earth derives its name" (3:14-15). Paul kneels in reverence to our loving heavenly Father, who provides and enables many kinds of family, which reflect the "family" of the Trinity. These include his family of angels in heaven and his families of every culture around the world. Families are created by God as the basic loving community of our societies for nurturing children to love him. Importantly it also includes his local church families of adopted children everywhere.

A NEW HUMANITY

APRIL 25

EPHESIANS 1:1-14 REDEEMED

MAY 2

EPHESIANS 1:15-23 RESURRECTED

MAY 9

EPHESIANS 2:1-10 RESTORED

MAY 16

EPHESIANS 2:11-22 RECONCILED

MAY 23

EPHESIANS 3:1-13 REVEALED

MAY 30

EPHESIANS 3:14-21 RENEWED

JUNE 6

EPHESIANS 4:1-16 REBUILT

JUNE 13

EPHESIANS 4:17-5:2 REPENTANT

JUNE 20

EPHESIANS 5:3-20 REGENERATE

RESOURCE



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GETTING STARTED

1. Describe how you personally experience the love of Christ?
2. Would you describe yourself as a ‘bold pray-er’?

INTO THE TEXT

READ VERSES 14-19

3. What does Paul ask the Father to give the Ephesian Christians(v 16, 18, 20)
4. What does he ask God to do through the power of his Spirit? How would you put Paul’s requests into your own words?

v.16-17

v. 18-19

READ VERSES 20-21

5. Why can we realistically hope to become more suitable dwelling places for the perfect Christ?
6. How can we truly know the unknowable love of Christ?

TAKEAWAY

7. How do these verses help us when:

we don't know what to pray for?

we begin to think prayer doesn't work?

we feel inadequate as believers?

we feel we are unloved or misunderstood?

8. Paul is in prison when he prays this bold prayer full of hope and joy. As we think about our own prayer lives how does this

encourage us?

challenge us?

9. Spend some time praying the words and the way that Paul does here.