

EPHESIANS

Bible Study 3:14-21

Questions will be posed and space will be allowed for a written response. Make every effort to answer the questions before looking below for the answer. **The answers will be in bold print at the end of the “questions” section.**

A Prayer for the Ephesians – 3:14-21:

1. What do verses 14-15 say about the God to whom Paul prays?
2. What requests does Paul make in his prayer (verse 16-19)?
3. What is meant in verses 20-21? What do they mean to you?
4. Paul’s prayers and actions in behalf of the Gentile Ephesian Christians are meant for us too. How does that make you feel?
5. What is your favorite verse/phrase in this section?

Some Answers to the above Questions:

1. This resumes the thought begun in verse 1. The reason in verse 1 was that he wanted them to ponder all that God has done as explained in the preceding several verses.

Paul digressed to explain the mystery that God had revealed to him, that in the Christian Church God is pleased to have Jewish and Gentile believers in Christ stand as equals.

To kneel expresses deep emotion and reverence, as people in Paul’s day usually stood to pray.

God is our Father, and we can commit our prayers to him in confidence.

God is the prototype of all Fatherhood. His relationship to his children is the pattern of all other social relationships.

The family here refers to the Church. Not only is God our Father by creation, but he is also our Father by salvation.

As Christians we have taken on His name. Luther calls Christians “little” Christ’s. “Name” includes “reputation,” “fame,” and “memory.” A name of a person is literally that very person.

2. V – 16 “Out of His glorious riches He may strengthen you with power through His Spirit in your inner being.” Ask the class what this can mean in their daily lives. Don’t force anyone to share. Accept with thanks any of their responses.

Added Insight – An image of the riches of his glory is seen in the starry heavens, which proclaim at once the vast riches and surpassing glory of God. Or in the beautiful appearance of an autumn sunset, where the whole sky is flushed with clouds brightened into a sea of glory.

Added Insight – Paul requests that God would give the Ephesians strength – spiritual strength, which comes only through the Holy Spirit. Causing Christ to dwell in believers’ hearts is the real work of the Holy Spirit.

Added Insight – Our “inner being” is our mind and our heart. It is our conscience, our will, and our commitments. The actions we take, as Jesus said, flow from the inside out (Luke 6:43-45).

V – 17 “So that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith.” Ask the class what this can mean in their daily lives. Don’t force anyone to share. Accept with thanks any of their responses.

Added Insight – To “dwell” means to be “completely at home.” Christ was already present in the Ephesian believers’ lives (cf. Ro 8:9).

V -17 “And I pray that you being rooted and established in love.” Ask the class what this can mean in their daily lives. Don’t force anyone to share. Accept with thanks any of their responses.

Added Insight – The words “rooted” and “established” are verbs in perfect passive, indicating something which has already happened and is continuing as a stable and constant condition.

Added Insight – This is agape love which is purely unconditional, intentionally sacrificial, expressive in both word and action, and enduring, as in the case of Christ, even to death on the cross.

V – 18 “may have power together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ.” Ask the class what this can mean in their daily lives. Don’t force anyone to share. Accept with thanks any of their responses.

Added Insight – In width it stretches east and west far over the nations of the earth. In length it extends through all times unto the end things. In height it reaches into the heights of heaven where Christ lives, embracing the hosts of God’s angels in heaven. The full scope of the divine purpose can be understood only in a corporate life in the church.

V – 19 “And to know this love that surpasses knowledge – that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.” Ask the class what this can mean in their daily lives. Don’t force anyone to share. Accept with thanks any of their responses.

Added Insight – “surpasses knowledge” means not unknowable, but so great that it cannot be completely comprehended this side of heaven .

Added Insight – “Fullness” means that God, who is infinite in all his attributes, allows us to draw on his resources—in this case, his love.

3. Added Insight – The prayer and the first half of the Letter reach their high point in a doxology.

Added Insight – “God’s giving is not limited by our asking. “He is like an eternal, unfailing fountain. The more it pours forth and overflows, the more it continues to give. God desires nothing more serious from us than that we ask Him for much and great things.