

How should we pray for those we love so they are in a position where God can use them in ways beyond what they ask or think?

1. Pray they would grow strong and powerful for Christ in their inner being through study of God's Word, worship, prayer and Christian community.
2. Pray they would have a heart that is pure so that all of their life is open to Christ and is a comfortable place for Christ to have His home.
3. Pray that having begun a relationship with God by His love, they would stay rooted in God's love. Pray the Holy Spirit would supernaturally enlarge their heart to better comprehend the immense love God has for them and His church.

The result is they will be filled with God's presence. They will be increasingly like Jesus. They will be in a position to be used by God for His Kingdom in ways beyond what they could ask or imagine.

Life Group Questions

1. Read Ephesians 3:14-21 to familiarize yourself with the passage.
2. Read Ephesians 3:14-16. Paul prayed the Ephesian church would be strengthened in their inner being. What is the inner being? What happens when a Christian is spiritually weak? Pastor Kurt mentioned the Word of God as one of the primary resources God uses to strengthen our inner being. In the follow verses, what resources is God using to strength the inner being of His people? (See Psalm 119:105; Psalm 119:11; Luke 21:36; Acts 14:21-22; Acts 16:4-5; Psalm 119:169)
3. In what ways are growing physical strength and spiritual strength similar? In what ways are they different? (See 1 Timothy 4:8; 2 Corinthians 4:16)
4. As Jesus matured, in what ways did he he need to work to develop more than just his physical stature so he would be fit to be our savior? (See Luke 2:39-40; Luke 2:52; Hebrews 2:17)
5. Paul prays that Christ would feel extremely at home in our hearts. What would make Christ feel unsettled in someone's heart? For examples, see 1 Peter 3:7; Ephesians 4:30-32.
6. Paul talks about the four dimensions of God's love for us that are beyond our knowledge and ability to comprehend. The only way to understand the amount of love God has for us is for the Holy Spirit to supernaturally expand the comprehension of our heart. How does knowing that God loves you that much change the way you feel about yourself? How does it change the way you feel about the trials we face? (To better understand the scope of God's love for us, see Romans 8:35-39)



Ephesians 3:14-21 Getting More Joy From The Gift Of The Son

December 16, 2018

1. Introduction to Paul's Prayer

For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named,... Ephesians 3:14-15 (ESV)

A. God's plan has always been to showcase His wisdom through Christ's church and Christ's people.

...and to bring to light for everyone what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God, who created all things, so that through the church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places. This was according to the eternal purpose that he has realized in Christ Jesus our Lord,... Ephesians 3:9-11 (ESV)

*Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, **according to the power at work within us**, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen. Ephesians 3:20-21 (ESV)*

B. Paul prays on his knees, because he is serious.

C. Paul prays directly to God the Father because with Jesus, we don't need an intermediary.

2. How should we pray for those we love so God can use them in ways beyond what they would ask or imagine?

A. Pray that God would grow them to be strong and powerful for Christ in their inner being.

...that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being,...
Ephesians 3:16 (ESV)

Growing our inner strength is similar to growing our outer strength.

One way to grow strong in Christ in our inner being is by spending time in the Word of God.

Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up into salvation. 1 Peter 2:2 (ESV)

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God. Colossians 3:16 (ESV)

So we do not lose heart. Though our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day. 2 Corinthians 4:16 (ESV)

B. Pray their heart, which is Christ's home, would be a comfortable place for Christ to live.

...so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith... Ephesians 3:17 (ESV)

C. Having begun a relationship with God by His love, pray God would supernaturally expand their heart to better comprehend the love God has for them and for his church.

...that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge,... Ephesians 3:17–19 (ESV)

We love because he first loved us. 1 John 4:19 (ESV)

Above all, keep loving one another earnestly, since love covers a multitude of sins. 1 Peter 4:8 (ESV)

D. The result of these things is they will be filled with the fullness of God.

...that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. Ephesians 3:19 (ESV)

For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. Romans 8:29 (ESV)

And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit. 2 Corinthians 3:18 (ESV)

3. God is able to do more with us than we ask or think but what he does with us is according to His power at work in us.

Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen. Ephesians 3:20–21 (ESV)