

EPHESIANS: PRECISION THINKING FOR ACCURATE THEOLOGY

SESSION 13 | EPHESIANS 3:13 – 4:3

PAUL'S DESIRE AND PRAYER | EPHESIANS 3:13-21

- Verse 13 –
 - Paul's **desire** (that is, his request from them) is that they **faint not**.
 - The word **faint** is ἐγκακέω [enkakeo], to come into evil.
 - The prayer is that the Ephesians would not become discouraged. It is the Ephesians **glory** that they remain encouraged.
 - It is a praiseworthy thing to be encouraged in the face of discouragement.
- Verses 14-15 –
 - Paul will pray **unto the Father** (always the recipient of our prayers).
 - It is in the Father that **the whole family...is named**.
 - This likely is an understanding that all people are in ultimate submission to God, but could be more specific of the **whole Christian family**, both dead and alive.
- Verses 16-19 –
 - Verses 16-19 are the substance of Paul's prayer request.
 - He gives four requests, all based on **the riches of his glory**. The four things that Paul wants God to give to the Ephesians on this basis are:
 - Strength that comes from the **might by his Spirit** who dwells in **the inner man**. The phrase "inner man" is used in Romans 7:22 and 2 Corinthians 4:16 and is a reference to the spiritual realm of the human existence. The **might by his Spirit** is not a Samson kind of might that was in the *outer man*, but is an invisible spiritual strength.
 - Verse 17 is grammatically one request, though the KJV semicolon makes it look like two. The request is that Christ would **dwell in your hearts both by faith** and that your hearts would be **rooted and grounded in love**. (Note: most of the recently popular negative preaching about "asking Jesus into your hearts" is built on a Calvinism that requires works to prove salvation and is largely unrelated to this verse, though this verse is the only verse that mentions Christ in our hearts.)
 - That the Ephesians would *fully grasp* the full dimension of _____. The sentence is not completed. It could be connected with v. 19, so that the full dimension of the **love of Christ** is in view, but the grammar doesn't lend itself to this. More likely the clue is the words **with all the saints**. It was the Jewish believers who had experienced the full **breadth, and length, and depth, and height** of the work of God in the world through Jesus Christ, who walked among them. Paul's prayer is that, even though they were in a different time and place, they would have a full experience with Christ.
 - Verse 19 is one request, based on the knowing *the love of Christ, which is beyond knowledge* in order **that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God**. Though we can never fully grasp the love of Christ, we should learn more and more to see and appreciate this love, for doing so will allow us to be *filled unto fullness* with God.

- Verses 20-21 –
 - Paul concludes his prayer with a petition of praise. It is praise because it glorifies God, it is petition because it indirectly asks for God's power in our lives.
 - Even with **the power that worketh in us** our prayers only touch the surface of God's ability, for He can **do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think**.
 - Paul says *glory to Him in the church by Christ Jesus*.
 - The word **church** should probably be translated *assembly* since the church does not extend **throughout all ages, world without end**.

THE INSTRUCTIONS FOR A WORTHY WALK | EPHESIANS 4:1-3

- Verse 1 –
 - The word **beseech** is the familiar Greek word παρακαλέω [parakaleo], often used of the Holy Spirit. It means *to come alongside with a call*.
 - The word **worthy** is ἀξιῶς [axios] from which we get *axiom* and *axiomatic*. An axiom is a *self-evident truth*, and our walk is to be *axiomatic*, that is, *of the nature of self-evident truth*.
 - The word **vocation** is from the root καλεω [kaleo], thus a *calling*. Thus, this root is used three times in verse 1, in **beseech**, **vocation**, and **called**. While the modern sense of a **vocation** is a career, the fuller sense is *a calling*. Notice the *vocal* root of the word.
- Verses 2-3 –
 - The instructions of verses 2-3 are Paul's expansion of the instruction to **walk worthy**. To do so, our walk must be:
 - **with all lowliness** - that is a *humble thought process*.
 - **and meekness** - that is, a *gentle spirit* in all that we do.
 - **with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love** - our Christian lives should lead us to have a *long fuse* before our anger bursts, and an endurance of others based on **love**.
 - **endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit** - we should have a *diligent labor* that works toward unity. Our spirit should be, "how can I bring us together in the Spirit **in the bond of peace?**"