

THE TRANSFORMING POWER OF CHRIST (vv. 16-17a)

READ VERSES 16-17a.

1. How would you describe the glorious riches of God, that Paul appeals to as the foundation of his prayer?
2. What is the Holy Spirit's primary role in the life of the believer?
3. If Christ already dwells in our hearts by faith, why do you think Paul prays that Christ would dwell in our hearts by faith?
4. What would it look like if Christ were truly at home in our hearts and lives?
5. What are some steps you can take to insure that Christ is truly at home in your heart and life?

THE TRANSFORMING POWER OF CHRIST'S LOVE (vv.17b-19)

READ VERSES 17b-19.

1. How does Paul describe the love of Christ in these verses?
2. The heart of Paul's prayer is that we would "know this love that surpasses knowledge..." How can we possibly know the unknowable?
3. Why do you think living in authentic Christian community (I pray that... you may have power together with all God's holy people) is essential to fully comprehending the width, length, height and depth of Christ's love?
4. What would a community of believers that was deeply transformed by the love of God look like?

A DOXOLOGY TO THE GOD WHO IS ABLE (vv. 20,21)

READ VERSES 20,21.

1. How does Paul describe God in these verses?
2. Why is it important for us to know that God is both willing and able to do immeasurably more than we can ask or imagine?
3. Why do you think Paul prays that Christ would be glorified in the church (in this particular passage), rather than in the lives of individual Christians?
4. How is Christ glorified in the church?
5. What is your role in glorifying Christ in the church?

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GOSPEL SHAPED PRAYER



You cannot shuffle through the pages of the New Testament without noticing that prayer was a vital component of the early Christian experience. It was important to Jesus. He often rose early in the morning to find a quiet place to pray. It was important to Paul. His letters are peppered with impassioned pleas on behalf of his readers. He asks them in turn, to pray for him. It was important to the disciples. They no doubt noticed the role prayer played in Jesus' life and asked him to teach them to pray. It was important to the early church. Almost every breakthrough in the life and mission of the church was born in and through praying together.

In our day the impassioned pleas of dependent prayer have given way to self confidence and stubborn independence. Nothing indicates our perceived lack of need for God, more than the fact that we turn to ourselves rather than him for the deepest needs of our lives. In short, we don't pray, because we don't feel a need to pray.

Jesus told us our joy would be complete when we asked in his name, and received what we asked from him. Few things are more vital to gospel shaped worship than a life of humble dependent prayer. Paul's prayer in Ephesians 3:14-21 is an extraordinary reminder that no matter what else we pray for, the gospel should always be the center of our prayer.

Paul prays for two things. He prays that we would experience the transforming power of Christ in our hearts, and that we would experience the transforming power of Christ's love in our fellowship.

READ EPHESIANS 3:14-21.