

I Bow My Knees

Sermon Delivered on April 28th, 2024
AM Service

By: Pastor Greg Hocson

Text:

Ephesians 3:14 For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, 15: Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, 16: That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; 17: That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, 18: May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; 19: And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God. 20: Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, 21: Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.

Introduction

In **chapter one**, Paul begins his letter to the believers in Ephesus by reminding them that they are blessed beyond measure; that God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, has blessed them in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly realms. Saved by the pure grace of God, a salvation planned from before the foundation of the world, adopted as children through Jesus Christ, redeemed through His blood, and sealed and secured by the Holy Spirit.

Then in **chapter two**, he focuses on the mercy and grace of God in saving them, made them alive in Christ, granted access unto the Father by the one Spirit. Then in **chapter three** verse fourteen, Paul writes, “For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.” Paul says for this reason; seeing the greatness of this plan; as he thinks on all these, he bows his knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; he falls to his knees and prays to God the Father. He prays these life-changing, life-transforming prayers ...

Ephesians 3:16 That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; 17: That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, 18: May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; 19: And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.

If we can only learn how to pray aright, I believe our hearts would be transformed and our lives would be radically changed. This morning, we are not going to look at his prayer for the church yet, but we are going to look the basis and attitude as the apostle Paul approaches the Father and as he intercedes for others.

Consider our text with me in three headings, namely, **Relationship** with God, **Reverence** for God, and **Reliance** on God.

I - Relationship with God

Ephesians 3:14 For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. 15: Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named,

True prayer, Biblical prayer to God is based on relationship. In order to pray aright we must be related to God as our Father. God has a family, and **we must belong to His family if we are to pray rightly.** As I have said many times before, I will say it again—not all men are children of God.

John 8:44 Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it. 45: And because I tell you the truth, ye believe me not. 46: Which of you convinceth me of sin? And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me? 47: He that is of God heareth God's words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God.

This passage speaks of the Pharisees whose father is the devil. There are those who reject Christ, there are those who ignore Christ, and these are not children in the family of God.

How do we enter into this family?

We need to be born into a family—physically and spiritually. John 1:12 makes clear even though all men are made in the image of God, not all men are His children.

John 1:11 He came unto his own, and his own received him not. 12: But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: 13: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

Galatians 3:22 But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe. 23: But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. 24: Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. 25: But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster. 26: **For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.** 27: For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. 28: There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. 29: And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

God has a wonderful family, and its members are every Jew and every Gentile who have placed their faith in Christ for their salvation. It is by faith that we enter into God's family. God is the Father of those and only those who trust in Christ for salvation. Some of the members are already in heaven, and others are here on earth representing and proclaiming Christ to the world.

II - Reverence for God

Ephesians 3:14 For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,

1. Respect

The recipients of this letter can relate to what Paul is saying when he said, “I bow my knees ...” John Phillips writes, “*They are familiar with Monarchy; King; Throne. They understand that when someone approaches the throne, he bows the knee. True, God is our Father, just as He is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. True, we are bidden to come boldly to Him. True, He loves us with an everlasting love. True, we have instant access to Him day or night. True, no request is too great or too small to be brought to Him. True, no earthly child in our culture goes down on his knees before his human father. But our Father is God. The Scriptures clearly teach that God should be approached with reverence and awe. Evidently Paul knelt when he prayed. This posture helped to remind him of the awesome majesty and nobility of the One he knew he could address as Father.*” (Phillips, J. Exploring Ephesians)

Now what is the significance of bowed head and bowed knees? Understand that physical posture be it a bowed head or bent knees, does not mean anything unless is an **honest reflection of the posture of the heart**. This reminds of a story about a mother who told her son to sit down. And the child sat down but he told his mother. “*Mother I am sitting on the outside, but I am standing in the inside.*” The posture of the child’s body did not match the posture of his heart. O, how often we bow and kneel on the outside yet stand up stiff and rigid in the inside. So understand, that praying to God does not require a certain physical posture, but **postures do give expression to the attitude of our hearts**—an attitude of **reverence**.

So, Paul starts his prayer with an attitude of reverence. We must remember who we are praying to. Sadly, in our day, we have lost that reverential attitude to a holy God. The country singer Garth Brooks wrote a song entitled “*Unanswered Prayers,*” in which he refers to God as “*the man upstairs.*” He may not intend it this way, but such reference is highly disrespectful, and reveals a lack of understanding who God is. **God should never be reduced to just the man upstairs.** We must come to God with awe, with reverence.

Our Lord taught His disciples how to approach the Father in [Matthew 6: 9](#), where He said, “[After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.](#)”

Although we may approach our Father God with boldness and confidence, we must remember that He is in still in Heaven which means He is infinitely above us. The phrase “[which art in Heaven](#)” speaks of God’s greatness and majesty and it should remind us all to approach Him with deepest reverence and awe.

2. Submission

Ephesians 3:14 For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, 15: Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, 16: That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man;

Bowing here is more of an attitude than a posture. To bow and bend one's knees is a posture which communicates not only an attitude of reverence, but also an **attitude of humility and submission.**

This is how we must approach our Father in Heaven, with humility and submission as signified by the bowing of our knees.

[Psalm 95:6](#) O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the LORD our maker.

It is an outward expression of the inward disposition. It is submitting our will to God's will, in essence saying, *“God, whatever you want is what I want.”* Isn't this what our Lord taught His disciples again in [Matthew 6:9-10](#), *“After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.”*

III - Reliance on God

[Ephesians 3:16](#) That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory.

Whatever Paul was asking for the believers, he understands that God must grant it to them. He knows there is nothing he could do physically to make it happen. He knows that what he is asking is something that God grants to a person. This is why he bows his knees to the Father asking God to grant it to them. Paul is completely relying upon God's riches of glory.

[Ephesians 3:16](#) That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; [17](#): That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, [18](#): May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; [19](#): And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.

This life-changing, life-transforming prayer, God must grant, and it is only granted through earnest and fervent prayer unto the God who is *“able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us.”*

The apostle Paul goes on to say in [Ephesians 3:16b](#) *“... according to the riches of his glory.”* The apostle Paul not only understands that whatever he was asking for the believers, God must grant it to them, but he also asks that may God grant it *“according to the riches of his glory.”* Paul prays that may God grant it to the believers not out of His riches but according to His riches in glory, which is infinitely greater. *“The first is proportionate, the latter is a portion of! There is a ‘wealth’ of difference!”* – Adam Clarke

“If a pauper were to give us something according to his wealth, that would not be much. However, if a billionaire gave according to his wealth, that would be something. If, however, a rich man were to give us five dollars, that would not be according to his wealth. God does not give to us according to our standards but according to the standard of His enormous riches. God empowers us with that kind of riches. He gives to us according to His riches and not meagerly out of His riches.” – Verse-by-Verse Commentary by Dr. Grant C. Richardson

If I am a billionaire and I give you ten dollars, I have given you out of my riches; but if I give you a million dollars, I have given to you according to my riches. The first is a portion; the second is a proportion. And that's how God gives—He gives according to the riches of His glory!

And what does He grant you and me “[according to the riches of his glory?](#)” You will have to come back next Lord’s Day to find out.

Closing Exhortations

“Because God is our heavenly Father, we do not come to Him in trembling and scared, afraid that He will reject or refuse us or be indifferent. We do not come to God to appease Him as the pagans do to their deities. We come to a tender, loving, concerned, compassionate, accepting Father. A loving human father always accepts the advances of his children, even when they have been disobedient or ungrateful. How much more does our heavenly Father accept His children, regardless of what they have done or not done? Paul approaches the Father with boldness and confidence, knowing that He is more willing for His children to come to Him than they ever are of going to Him. He knows that God has been waiting all the while with a Father’s heart of love and anticipation.” (MacArthur, J: Ephesians. Chicago: Moody Press)

There were two boys talking. The one said to the another, “*My dad owns the factory where your dad works. So, you better respect me.*” The other boy says, “*That’s nothing! My dad owns the universe. He owns time and eternity. He owns the earth. He owns every factory in every place.*”

How true! Our Father owns everything. That’s our Father and He invites us to come to Him any time and with holy boldness.

*Thou art coming to a king,
Large petitions with thee bring,
For his grace and power are such
None can ever ask too much.*

-John Newton

AMEN !