

EPHESIANS 3:14-21 Study (NLT) "MORE" AUGUST 29, 2010

• **3:14-15 Pray The Plan.** "When I think of the _____ and _____ of God's plan, I fall to my knees and _____ to the Father, the Creator of everything in heaven and on earth."

PRAY: As the implications of the Father's plan, through the works of Jesus, sinks in, Paul is inclined to fall on his knees and pray to the Father.... that the Father's plan will happen in his place and time. The work of the Holy Spirit is released by prayer and His works are unlimited, whereas the efforts of people are almost futile. Therefore the first ministry of pastors, elders and mature Christians is prayer.

• The first church in Jerusalem – a congregation of 15,000 to 20,000 men, women, and children – fed all who were hungry among them every day – the widows and orphans, the stranger and the poor. The twelve disciples were in charge of this. One day they called a meeting and said, "We apostles should spend our time preaching and teaching the word of God, not administering a food program." They asked that seven good men be chosen to take over the food program. Acts 6:1-4

THE PLAN: The Father Creator's plan and great effort in Christ Jesus is that every person in the world would see every other person as a beloved brother or sister and share the riches of the earth with each other. Jesus made it possible for every person to be free from the judgment, fear, and guilt of their sins. He made it possible for the Holy Spirit to indwell each and any person so that they would all have the same heart as He does and be family to each other. This does not happen anywhere close to perfect on earth. But where people "call on the name of the Lord" (pray), God's plan begins to happen in that place. People get eternal life and abundant life now on this earth. All things are possible for God and will be possible for us and our world if we will fall on our knees and pray. "Anyone who believes in Him will not be disappointed. Jew and the Gentile are the same in this respect. They all have the same Lord, who generously gives his riches to all who ask for them. For Anyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved." Romans 10:11-13

• **3:16 Strength.** "I pray that from his glorious, _____ resources he will give you mighty _____ strength through His Holy Spirit."

INNER STRENGTH: The race of life is not won (most of the time) by those who have the greatest talents, money, education, or powerful family and friends---things that the world believes insures success. The race of life is won by those who have "guts," an inner resilience, endurance, strength of will, and courage which causes them to persevere when others have given up. The Christian who kneels to pray will find himself rising with confidence, renewed strength, and answers and ideas running through his head. The Lord says, "Fear not for I am with you. Be not dismayed for I am your God. I will strengthen you. Yes, I will help you. I will uphold you with My righteous right hand." Isaiah 41:10

• **3:17 Home In Your Heart.** "And I pray that Christ will be _____ and more at _____ in your hearts as you _____ in Him."

MY HEART - CHRIST'S HOME: This is the name of a Christian tract that speaks of Jesus coming to a person and asking to come into their soul house. There were some rooms they were happy to have the Lord in – the kitchen, the living room. There were other rooms they did not want the Lord to enter—the bedroom, the office where the books were kept and the computer and internet were hooked up—some of the closets and drawers in their dresser, The Lord seemed to especially go into those rooms of the soul where there are things hidden, unclean and selfish. The point is that the

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Lord typically gets locked out of rooms in our life where the Devil is welcome—where the things we lust after are practiced—where there is shame and guilt.

TRUST (faith): There are a number of sides to faith. Faith that Jesus is God and Savior of the world. Faith that we are saved. Faith that God loves us just the way we are. Faith that God not only can but wants to heal us or help us. People believe God can do anything and give or forgive anything. But they may not believe He wants to do it for them. The Leper said, "Lord IF YOU WILL, You can make me clean." The Lord answered, "I will! Be clean!" Matthew 8:1-3

• **3:17-19 His unlimited Love.** "May your _____ go down deep into the soil of God's marvelous _____. And may you have the power to _____, as all God's people should, how _____, how _____, how _____ and how _____. His love really is. May you experience the love of Christ, though it is so great you will never fully understand it."

LOVE: The Greek word here is AGAPE. This is self-sacrificing love. Love which seeks no personal gain. Love which places high value on the other person. It is the love which only God had until the Holy Spirit poured it into the hearts of Christians. Romans 5:5 "When we were utterly helpless, Christ died for us sinners... God showed his great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners... We were restored to friendship with God by the death of his Son while we were still His enemies." Romans 5:6-10 It is this love poured into us that brings us to tears as we realize that the Father passionately loves us right now just as we are, His love breaks our heart and gives us hope.

• **3:19 Fullness.** "Then you will be _____ with the _____ of God (the life and power that comes from God)."

FULLNESS: The Greek word is "pleroma. It means something is filled up as full as it should be and can be. Jesus expressed the meaning of this word when he said that God gives "good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over." (Luke 6:38) The word is used of a ship whose cargo hold is entirely full, or of a town where every house has a family living in it. One man tells how he was being so filled with the fullness of God that he begged God to withdraw before his physical body would be exhausted by the overflowing joy and die.

• **3:20 More.** "Now glory be to God! By his mighty power at work within us, he is able to accomplish infinitely _____ than we would ever dare to ask or _____."

MORE: We will never get all the good things, all the personal success, all the joy, all the whatever that the Father wants to give us. Our faith in him is crippled by our self-focus, our persistent "sin consciousness." As we practice a God focus, a "Christ consciousness," an awareness that it was for me he suffered on the cross – that we become bold to believe the Father for everything.

• **3:21 Given Glory.** "May he be given glory in the Church and in Christ Jesus, _____ and ever through _____ ages. Amen." That's what we want the more we know the Lord.

WHAT DOES THIS SCRIPTURE MEAN TO YOU? _____

