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Intercession At It's Best

Ephesians 3:14-21

Please take your Bible and open to Ephesians 3:14. As you are turning there I want to remind you what we are doing in these mid week classes. My goal is to take basic areas of the Christian life and study what the Word of God says about them so that we can all live a little bit better these areas for the glory of God. I had a pastor who used to challenge people in his sermons to work it through. He would talk about a topic in the Christian life and then he would challenge us to spend more time in God's Word working it through so that we get a little better handle on it.

Our goal in this class on Paul's prayers is two fold:

1. We want to use these prayers of Paul as an outline for our own prayer life

If you are in Christ you pray. The Spirit moves you to pray. You care about what God cares about. This is where we can learn from Paul. Paul's life was devoted to prayer. Paul prayed a lot and his letters show us what he prayed for. We know that what Paul prayed for was glorifying to God because as an apostle Paul wrote his letters with the help of the Holy Spirit. **All Scripture is God breathed, therefore, the kinds of things Paul prays for are glorifying to God.** We want to learn from these prayers in order to improve our own life and to make sure that the kinds of things we are praising God for or praying for bring the most glory to God.

The second goal in this class on Paul's prayer is:

2. We want to use these prayers as a guide for our own Christian lives

The kinds of things that Paul prays for are the kinds of things that we should be pursuing in our own Christian lives. **Paul's prayers give us something to aim for in our Christian lives.** If what Paul prays for becomes a reality in our lives our lives cannot not change. Paul's prayers rearrange the furniture in our hearts the right way. So we want these prayers to aid us in the kinds of things we pray for and we want to pursue the kinds of things Paul prays for in our own individual lives. If what Paul prays for becomes real in our hearts, we will all change for the glory of God.

Please take your Bible and open to Ephesians 3:14. As you are turning there I want to begin with a deep theological question - **How many of you like donuts?** Most people like donuts. We like eating them more than seeing what they do to our waistline but we're not here to talk about that.

I still remember my dad taking me to shipley's donuts on Saturday mornings in East Texas when I was a kid. **We would order donuts and then we would stand behind the glass and watch our donuts ride down in a single file line through this glorious place where they would be drenched in icing.** We would watch our donuts get the glaze bath and then they would hand them to us hot and delicious. Those are good memories.

For the past several years I've been getting up on Saturday mornings and going out to get donuts for my girls. **This past Saturday I drove over to quack daddy donuts along with half of Westfield and got some donuts for my girls.** If you've never been there I recommend getting there before 9:00 and getting a donut with white icing and bacon bits. That's a good way to start any day that ends in Y. My kids are enjoying those donuts.

Whenever we go to California to visit Brianna's parents her dad loves to take us all out for donuts on Saturday mornings. The donut shop that we usually go to has an owner with an interesting story. A sad story. He worked hard for many years and saved up a lot of money. Instead of putting the money he earned in the bank, he chose to keep his earnings at home. The rumor is that he had saved up close to 1 million dollars over the years. Then one day he came home and someone had broken into his home and stole all of his cash. All the money he had worked for and saved up was gone.

How many of you think the donut man's perspective on life changed when he realized all the money he had worked for and saved was gone? Why did his perspective change? Because something important to him and the quality of his life moving forward wasn't there anymore. He was basically starting over.

Some of you are probably wondering - did the elders bring Pastor Blake here to talk about donuts and why you should put your money in the bank? We kinda already knew that. What does any of this have to do with Paul's letter to the Ephesians and to learning from Paul's prayers? I'm convinced that many believers in Christ, people who possess every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ live like the donut man who lost all of his money. We have every spiritual blessing in Christ but we don't know what they are and we don't access them like we should. They are there but they have little or no effect on our practical Christian lives. That's not good.

Paul's letter to the Ephesians shows us our wealth in Christ. These are not financial blessings. Paul isn't talking about actual money. The blessings Paul describes in Ephesians are much better than that. These are spiritual blessings that belong to everyone who is united to Christ.

Remember the goal of Paul's ministry and the reason he suffered so much (Paul was either in prison for preaching the gospel or about to be in prison) was to preach to the Gentiles "the unsearchable riches of Christ" (Ephesians 3:8). According to Peter O' Brien the unsearchable riches of Christ describes **"the wealth of divine grace and glory which Christ possesses Himself and which He lavishly gives to His people."**

Why do we need to live with a continual awareness of these riches? First, they help us glorify God. We want to glorify God when we realize we are all spiritually bankrupt and through Christ God fills our spiritual bank account with every spiritual blessing. Rehearsing who Christ is and all we have from Him and in Him helps us continually glorify God. It changes our perspective.

Second, it motivates us to keep following Christ when following Christ is hard. We need motivations to keep following Jesus Christ like He said we must. Luke 9:23-24, "And he said to all, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will save it." Paul reminded Timothy in his last letter in 2 Timothy

3:12 that all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.” **Not all believers in Christ suffer the same way but we will all suffer in some way.**

Maybe you are here tonight and you’re about ready to throw in the towel. You know it is not getting any easier to live for Christ and you don’t see much progress in your Christian life and you are wondering if it’s worth it to keep following Christ in a world that hates Christ and people who follow Him. **Ephesians reminds you that it is worth it to follow Christ no matter what.**

What kept Paul going when the going got tough? **Paul kept going because he understand the glories of the gospel.** He was a recipient of divine grace. He knew what God had given him in Christ and he willingly suffered to help other people know what God had given them in Christ

You see, Paul was not content with people knowing the basic of salvation. **He wasn’t content for Christians to sit on the beach and look out at the beautiful ocean of salvation.** He was more like the scuba diver instructor who wanted to take the people of God beneath the surface, down deep, and lift up the pearls of salvation and make sure Christians live in a continual state of awe for who Christ is and what He has done, is doing and will do for His people.

So as Paul sits in prison in Rome (Where he wrote Ephesians from) and thinks about the believers back in Ephesus Paul shepherds them by doing two things - **Paul describes our spiritual blessings in Christ and then Paul devotes time to prayer for Christians to comprehend all we have in Christ.** It’s one thing to have every spiritual blessing in Christ, it’s another thing for those blessings to get a hold of your heart and to change the mission control center of your life.

In a book called *Gleanings From Paul*, the author A.W. Pink wrote about why Christians dwell so much in the valleys and so little on the mountains. He wrote, “Is it not because they have failed to apprehend the wonderful portion which is there's in Christ, because they do not grasp and enjoy the inestimable privileges which are already theirs, because they do not possess their possessions, because they are regulated so much by their moods and feelings instead of living by faith in the One who loved them and gave himself for them? This is true, and varying degrees, of all of us.”

That's what Paul is after in his prayers that we can all learn from. Paul wants us to possess our possessions. **Really to be possessed by our spiritual possessions in Christ. How do we become possessed by our possessions in Christ?** This happens in answer to prayer. When we pray for the right things God changes our lives from the inside out. Yes, it matters what we pray for.

Ephesians 3:14-21 is what one another describes as intercession at its best. James Rosscup, a professor for many years at The Master's University, taught a class on prayer. Dr. Rosscup wrote a book on every prayer in the Bible. Of all the prayers of intercession in Scripture Dr. Rosscup describes this prayer in Ephesians 3:14-21 as intercession at its best.

I want you to picture a mountain. This prayer is like walking up a mountain. The top of the mountain is God being glorified in His church (Ephesians 3:20-21). For God to be glorified in His church several things have to happen in our hearts. What has to happen for God to really be glorified at Cornerstone Bible Church?

Let's read what has to happen for God to be glorified in our church in Eph 3:14-21:

Ephesians 3:14-21

- 14 For this reason I bow my knees before the Father,
- 15 from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named,
- 16 that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being,
- 17 so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith—that you, being rooted and grounded in love,
- 18 may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth,
- 19 and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.
- 20 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,
- 21 to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

Do you see how this prayer ends with praise? Paul knew what was at stake in this prayer. If the conditions of the prayer are met and answered God will be glorified in the

church. There's a lot at stake in this prayer if we really want God to be glorified, which is the whole purpose of the church.

Before we consider this prayer let's try and think about how this prayer would have hit the original audience. How would this encourage you if you were the original recipient of this letter? **First, they would be encouraged to know that Paul still cared about them and was still praying for them.** Paul moved on physically from Ephesus because God had more work for him to do in other places but he kept praying for these people years later and they knew Paul still cared. It's always encouraging to pray for other people and then to tell them you are praying for them.

Second, they would be encouraged to know what Paul prayed for them. I'm not sure if any of you write out your prayers. If you do, you probably keep whatever you write personal. You don't want anyone to read your prayer journal or what you pray for because it's between you and the Lord. In this prayer, Paul opens up his prayer journal and lets these believers know what he prays for them.

I think if I lived back then and someone brought this letter to the church and read it out loud and I was sitting there listening I would be thinking, "Man, if God answers this prayer my life will never be the same. I know my life has already changed through the transforming power of the gospel but I also know the wickedness of my own heart even after conversion. I know what I think about. I know the struggles of my heart. If Christ were to really make Himself at home in my heart and His love became more and more real to me I know my life would change and God would be glorified."

The good news for all of us is that God doesn't stop working in our hearts when we get saved. The One who began a good work in us is faithful to complete it until Christ comes back or we go to be with Him. You may be discouraged with your spiritual progress tonight and that's a good thing. We should never be content with where we are in Christ. We should always want to be growing in the Lord. You can be encouraged tonight because this prayer is a reminder of what the Holy Spirit who dwells in you can do for you to help you live for the glory of God.

I want you to see 4 things in this prayer:

1. Paul's Posture - Ephesians 3:14
2. Paul's Provider - Ephesians 3:15
3. Paul's Petitions - Ephesians 3:16-19

4. Paul's Praise - Ephesians 3:20-21

Look at Paul's posture in this prayer in Ephesians 3:14, "For this reason I bow my knees before the Father." Why did Paul get down on his knees before he asked for God to do something for His people? Think back on your life for a minute. If you're a Christian you've probably prayed a lot since the Lord saved you. Lots of prayers. But think about the times in your life when you got down on your knees to pray? **When were those times?**

Most of us look back on our lives and the times we got down on our knees to pray were times we were most aware of our need for God to intervene. We get on our knees when we are most aware of our need for God's intervention. **Our inability and God's ability drives us to our knees.**

Paul got down on his knees to pray this prayer because he was aware of who he was talking to and he knew God could do something Paul could not do. Paul could give God's people God's Word, but Paul could not make it effective. Only God's Spirit can take the word of God and make it effective in our hearts.

Paul also got down on his knees to pray this prayer because he knew God was generous. God's gospel generosity has been on full display in the first three chapters of Ephesians. There's no way we can read Ephesians and not be blown away by the grace of God. Remember grace is God's unmerited favor that comes to us through Christ. We're all unworthy, but Christ makes us worthy. **God's power and generosity drove Paul to his knees.**

The next thing we see in verse 14 and verse 15 is Paul's Provider:

Ephesians 3:14-15

- 14 For this reason I bow my knees before the Father,
- 15 from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named,

Paul's provider is God the Father. This is a unique Father because he's unlike any human father. Paul describes him as the One from every family in heaven and on earth is named. Paul is reminding the believers in Ephesus that God is sovereign. Every family on earth derives its existence from God the Father.

Paul told the pagans in Athens in Acts 17:24-26:

- 24 The God who made the world and everything in it, being Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in temples made by man,
- 25 nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mankind life and breath and everything.
- 26 And he made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined allotted periods and the boundaries of their dwelling place,

Paul bows his knee before God the Father who is the sovereign creator of every family on earth. Everyone was made by God for God. Does this mean everyone created by God has the right to call Him Father? Is God the Father of everyone He has made? Who gets to call God Father? Only believers in Christ.

The father of unbelievers is the devil. Jesus told the unbelieving Jews in John 8:44, “You are of your father, the devil.” Ephesians 2:2 reminds us that prior to our salvation we all lived under the power of the evil one. We were all once sons of disobedience. **When Paul uses the description of God as Father he has salvation in mind.** The family Paul has in mind is the church family that he describes back in Ephesians 2:11-22. Those who have access to God the Father through faith in God the Son in the power of God the Spirit. **Paul is thinking of God the Father as our creator and redeemer.**

James Rosscup puts both of these ideas together “The Father is the redeemer of believers, sons, heirs, saints, the church, those in Christ, the ones God raised up with Christ, His new creation (2:10), the temple, the body, and so on. In this epistle, God is Father of believers (1:2; 4:6). On the other hand, the letter recognizes God’s magisterial control over all in heaven and on earth (1:10), His creation of all (3:9), and has a high saturation with thoughts about God’s greatness that Paul also writes in Colossians. “The latter is quite clear about God being creator of all, the different orders of beings, and closely relating with this that He is the God of redemption (1:16, 18–20). The Father from whom every family grouping in creation has its name (significance and distinctives) is the God the apostle counts on to be absolutely sufficient as he presses his appeal.”

What can we learn from Ephesians 3:14-15? Has Paul asked God for anything yet? No. Before Paul asks God for something he takes time to remind us who God is. **Our God is the Father of creation and redemption.** It’s good, isn’t it, to make sure before we

ask God to do something that we remember who we are talking to. To pause and remember who we are praying to before we ask God to do something.

It's a good idea before we ask for something in prayer to remember who God is. One of the things we see that is lacking in our day is reverence for God. It used to be a noble thing to be called a God fearing person. Why? The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. Why should we fear God and come before Him in reverence? **He made us and He saved us.** We should fear God because He made us and we all sinned against Him and God paid the ultimate price to buy us back.

1 Peter 1:17-19

- 17 And if you call on him as Father who judges impartially according to each one's deeds, conduct yourselves with fear throughout the time of your exile,
- 18 knowing that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold,
- 19 but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot.

We should fear our heavenly Father. This doesn't mean we should be scared of God as if He might get angry with us and cast us into hell. No. This reverence is based on what He did for our salvation. We can't look at the cross and think God doesn't care about sin. God crushed the Son of His love for our sin to ransom us, to buy us back. That does more than put out worth on display - It puts God's worth on display. We take God series when we consider our Savior's sacrifice.

Take some time before you ask God for anything to adore Him for who He is and what He did for your salvation. Before you ask, adore!

Paul knew God's power in creation and redemption and so he asks God to do something for His people in Ephesians 3:16-19:

3. Paul's Petitions - Ephesians 3:16-19

Ephesians 3:16-19

- 16 that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being,

- 17 so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith—that you, being rooted and grounded in love,
18 may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth,
19 and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

The fact that Paul prays according to the riches of God’s glory means that God is more than able to answer Paul’s request. God is infinitely glorious. Paul prays with confidence because he knows how glorious God is and that His divine resources never run dry.

The first thing that Paul asks God for is:

a. **Power**

“that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being.” The audience of the strengthening is God the Father. The applier of the strengthening is God the Holy Spirit. **The place where strength is needed is where? Where do we need to be strengthened to live for Christ? In the inner being.**

Both of Paul’s intercessory prayers in Ephesians 1:15-23 and Ephesians 3:14-21 focus on the hearts of believers. On the inside and not the outside. Most of us pray for external things, but Paul prayed for internal things. Why? Paul knew that our outer man is wasting away but our inner man is being renewed day by day (2 Cor. 4:16-18). Paul knew that Christians need to be strengthened on the inside to live for Christ in a sin cursed world.

Sometimes we look at our world that is growing increasingly wicked and we think - My Christian life would be so much easier if the world around me wasn’t spiraling out of control. Remember how it was when we were little. There were no television shows that celebrated sin. Green Acres was the place to be, right?

Friend, can I remind you that no matter how good it was or how bad it gets what is most important about you is the condition of your heart. The world can’t make you sin. You don’t have to sin. If Christ lives in you by His Spirit you have the power you need to say

no to sin and yes to righteousness. God chose to leave us in the world to live as lights and Jesus prayed the night before the cross for God to sanctify us by the truth.

How does the Spirit strengthen us so that Christ dwells in our hearts? To dwell means to really live as one is at home, to have mastery over the house. Christ dominates the hearts of those who live by faith and allow the word of Christ to dwell in them richly. I like how William Hendriksen describes faith. "Faith is full surrender to God in Christ, so that one expects everything from God and yields everything to Him." Paul's prayer is for the Spirit to so work in our hearts that Christ owns our hearts.

Since we moved here we are living in a rental home. It's a nice home but it's not our home. We still have quite a few boxes that are in the basement. My daughter Cooper turned 8 on Sunday and Brianna and I were in the basement on Saturday night after she went to bed looking for something we needed to hang in the kitchen for her birthday. We looked through lots of boxes and couldn't find it. We eventually found it upstairs. There's a big difference between a rental home and your own home. You might feel comfortable in a rental home but it's not the same because it is not your home.

Let me ask you - Is your heart more like a rental home for Christ or does he own your heart? Have you completely surrendered your heart to the Lord Jesus Christ? Have you ever prayed - God you and I both know my heart is wicked. My mission control center is broken. I need you to give me a new heart and I give you complete access to my heart. I want Christ to take over my heart and make it his home now and forevermore. **Christ, you are no longer a renter - You're the owner.** I won't tell you what to do anymore. You tell me what to do. I'm yours.

You and I cannot do this on our own but we can through the power of God. This is a prayer for Christ to become the dominating factor in our attitudes and conduct. Paul's prayer is for Christ to settle down in our hearts so that His will, priorities, standards and directions take complete control.

Paul begins with a prayer for power. Next he focuses on:

b. Knowledge

Look at the middle of verse 17 through the middle of verse 19 - Ephesians 3:17-19

- that you, being rooted and grounded in love,
18 may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth,
19 and to **know** the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge

This request is similar to the first request. **Both of Paul's petitions have Christ at the center.** This is not a prayer for us to love Jesus more. This is a prayer for us to know the love of Jesus for us more. John Stott writes, "The love of Christ is broad enough to encompass all mankind, long enough to last for all eternity, deep enough to reach the most degraded sinner and high enough to exalt him to heaven."

How do we grow in our knowledge of the love of Christ? Let me try and give you a couple of ways that you can put yourself in the way of knowing the love of Christ more:

1. Never forget your spiritual condition when God saved you

By the way, Paul won't let you do that. Paul never forget who he was apart from Christ. He reminds Timothy in 1 Timothy 1:12-15:

1 Timothy 1:12-15

- 12 I thank him who has given me strength, Christ Jesus our Lord, because he judged me faithful, appointing me to his service,
13 though formerly I was a blasphemer, persecutor, and insolent opponent. But I received mercy because I had acted ignorantly in unbelief,
14 and the grace of our Lord overflowed for me with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus.
15 The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the foremost.

Paul never moved on from awe of his own salvation. He never forgot who he was before Christ and how much Christ loved him in spite of his sin, even in his sin. Paul also keeps reminding Christians that there is no cause in us for Jesus to love us. Jesus loves us because He chose to love us, not because of anything good He saw in us. We were not good when Jesus chose to die for us. Romans 5:8, "but God shows his love

for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” Christ died for us when we were God’s enemies. Meditate on God’s love in the past.

Another way to put yourself in the way of knowing the love of Christ more is:

2. Never stop fellowshiping with other believers who are serious about salvation

Pick friends who love to talk about salvation. Remember Paul is not just praying for individual Christians - He is praying for the whole church. This is something we pursue to know better together.

Kent Hughes, “We can only come to a better, fuller understanding of his love in community! This happens when we sit under the preaching of his Word. It happens when we study it together and discuss it. It happens when we share our knowledge of God’s love with each other. It happens when we observe it in our brothers and sisters. It happens as our hearts go upward in the worship of him. We need each other in order to comprehend his Word.”

On Wednesday mornings at 6:30 a group of men come together in this room and we sit in a circle and we cross our legs (I’m kidding about that part) - we come together and discuss the doctrine of salvation. It helps me to read the chapter before I come to the group but what really helps me is sitting in the circle and listening to my brothers in Christ talk about salvation. One thing Kirk has said that has really challenged me is that if the Bible says it, it is true. I believe that but it helps to have it reinforced.

Look with me at the end of Ephesians 3:19, “and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, **that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.**” This filling comes from God and is ongoing. James Montgomery Boice helps us with this part of the prayer, “Paul is praying that we will be filled and filled and filled and filled and filled— and so on forever, as God out of his infinite resources increasingly pours himself out into those sinful but now redeemed creatures he has rescued through the work of Christ.”

James Rosscup, ““The fullness is not an infinite one that turns each of us into a God, but the fullness God intends for each to reach at any given time, allowing for growth, in

His eternal purpose (3:11). It is to conform us, each in our God-given but ever-expanding capacity, and with our different gifts (4:11–16) and varied leading to be like His Son (Rom. 8:29; Phil. 3:21; 1 John 3:2).”

What happens if these conditions are met - if God answers Paul’s prayer for His people?

Paul transitions from petitions to praise in Ephesians 3:20-21:

4. Paul’s Praise - Ephesians 3:20-21

Ephesians 3:20-21

- 20 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,
21 to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

God is glorified in local churches where the gospel is experienced by the people of God in deeper and deeper ways.

What do you want most in the life of the church? What do you find yourself praying most for the church? When you pull into this neighborhood and see this big white church building what comes into your mind? Hopefully, what comes into our minds is that Cornerstone Bible Church is put here by God for the glory of God. As the power of the gospel continues to take root in our hearts on the inside God is glorified. God’s glory is put on display when our hearts are filled full with God’s fullness.

Warren Wiesbe tells the story about a winter day when he had an important speaking engagement in Chicago. The evening before the area was hit by a severe snowstorm. He did not have a garage to park his car in, so his car was not only covered with snow, ice had also formed under the fenders and bumpers. He kicked the ice off the back of his car and drove his car to the local gas station. When he got to the gas station, he pushed the button on the dashboard to open the gas cap and it didn’t work. No matter how hard or often he pushed, the cap stayed shut. The station attendant looked under the fender and discovered the problem. In kicking off the ice, Warren Wiersbe had broken the wire that connected the gas cap with the battery.

Warren Wierbe uses that illustration to make a point about the way far too many professing Christians live their lives. He writes, “Apparently this is what has happened to

many Christians. They have been cut off from their source of power. Unbelief, unconfessed sin, careless living, worldliness in action or attitude—all of these can rob us of power. And a Christian robbed of power cannot be used of God. “Without Me, ye can do nothing” (John 15:5).

Then he asks - Why does God share His power with us? So that we can build great churches for our own glory? So that we can boast of our own achievements? No! “To Him be glory in the church!” The Spirit of God was given to glorify the Son of God (John 16:14). The church on earth is here to glorify the Son of God. If our motive is to glorify God by building His church, then God will share His power with us.

The power of the Spirit is not a luxury; it is a necessity. God is able to do all—above all—abundantly above all—exceeding abundantly above all! Then he says, “**Get your hands on your spiritual wealth by opening your heart to the Holy Spirit, and praying with Paul for strength for the inner man ... for a new depth of love ... for spiritual apprehension ... and for spiritual fullness.**”

One thing I have told you is that it is one thing to come to this class and work through these prayers together. It is another thing to use these prayers as a guide in your own prayer life. If you want your life to change use these prayers as a model in your own prayer life for yourself and for other believers. Think about the difference it would make in our lives if we prayed like this and God answered our prayers. What is at stake is nothing less than God being glorified in our lives. Which is the point of salvation and the point of the church.

The good news is that the power we need for pleasing God is the power God supplies. **Remember prayer is not overcoming God’s reluctance. It is laying hold of His willingness.** Are you willing to pray this kind of prayer for yourself and then live it out? Are you willing to pray bold prayers and then see God work in your heart for His glory and your good? I hope you do. Let’s pray.