

Discussion Questions

Prepare

How is your prayer life? What are your struggles with prayer? Share a time when God answered a prayer that really moved you and that you remember to this day.

The Passage

For this reason I kneel before the Father, ¹⁵from whom his whole family in heaven and on earth derives its name. ¹⁶I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, ¹⁷so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, ¹⁸may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, ¹⁹and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

²⁰Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, ²¹to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus through- out all generations, forever and ever! Amen. Ephesians 3:14-21

1. The two foundational beliefs that undergird prayer are: God is able and God is willing. Why are these two beliefs so important when it comes to prayer? Which one does the world undermine the most causing people to lose confidence in praying?
2. Reflect on this statement: *"There is no problem that is so big that it overwhelms God, nor so small that God overlooks it."*
3. One thing that undermines some people's faith is, they prayed for a loved one to live and they didn't live. They saw God allowing their loved one to die as an unanswered prayer. Paul did not view God allowing him to die as being the lack of an answer to prayer. Paul actually saw it as the best way God could answer his prayer for deliverance from prison. Paul actually preferred God answered his prayer by taking him home. He did not see God allowing him to die as being an unanswered prayer! Why do we?

"For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain. If I am to go on living in the body, this will mean fruitful labor for me. Yet what shall I choose? I do not know! I am torn between the two: I desire to depart and be with Christ, which is better by far;" Philippians 1:21-23

4. Unpack this verse: *"Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us,"* (vs. 20) Discuss each part and what it says God is able to do if we ask him.
5. God is willing. Share a time when God answered an important prayer in the way you wanted him to answer it.

6. Share a time when you felt God did not answer a prayer in the way you thought he should have. Do you still have questions about his answer? Have you been able to come to terms with it or do you plan on asking God to help you understand what he allowed to happen in your life?

7. Reflect on this passage. Does it give you any comfort and hope?

"Lord, if you are willing, you can make me clean Jesus reached out his hand and touched the man. 'I am willing. Be clean!' Immediately he was cured of his leprosy." Matthew 8:2-3

8. Reflect on this: *"If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him!"* Matthew 7:11

What is God trying to say to us? How good is God and how have you experienced the goodness of God?

9. When it comes to trials and God's allowance of trials in our lives, does this passage help you face those trails better? Do they make them any easier?

"These trials will show that your faith is genuine. It is being tested as fire tests and purifies gold—though your faith is far more precious than mere gold. So when your faith remains strong through many trials, it will bring you much praise and glory and honor on the day when Jesus Christ is revealed to the whole world." 1 Peter 1:7

10. Share what you plan to do the next 21 days. Are you going to join us in prayer? Has God called you to fast as well? If so, which of the two fasts has God called you to: The Daniel fast or the one day fast (2 meals)? If you are doing the Daniel fast, what are you going to give up?

What do you hope will happen by the end of the next 21 days?