

Intro: Video

Do you ever feel like the bottle in the video? Feel like the pressure of life is slowly crushing you...collapsing under pressure Or, do you know someone that is experiencing pressure in their life, and you are watching them slowly crumble and collapse right before your eyes?

That is a part of what the Apostle Paul is writing to the Ephesian church about in our passage this morning. He has been talking about all of the amazing things God had done for those who know Him, and because it is so big, he says, **I PRAY YOU GET IT!** And so, he prays 5 things for us...

- *Might be for YOU*
- *Might be for someone you KNOW*
- *Might be for Today...or Tomorrow...But I want you to take note of the 5 Things Paul Prays for Ephesians...and US*

Eph 3:14-21 Page 828

Prayer #1: *Paul Prays That We Receive Inner Power Through God's Spirit Working In Our Inner Man.* Vs 16

- **Kneel:** Different postures of prayer: The physical reflects the spiritual
- **Strengthen:** He would pour His power, strength, vigor into you! (more the idea of His strength than yours!)
- **Inner Man:** Make your inner man/woman equal to pressure! (*Life throws all kinds of things at us...God provides*)
- **Through Spirit:** Instrumentality of His Spirit
>When we put our faith and trust in Him, ask Him for forgiveness, His spirit comes to live in our heart
>What Paul is praying here, is not that we get more of His Spirit, but that His Spirit gets more of us!

Applic: Eph 5:18 "Filled with the Spirit" Lit= That you be surrendered to His control

Facing situation at work, school, family: "God I can't...but YOU Can...Control my tongue, attitude..."

Prayer #2: *Paul Prays That We Would Allow Christ To Dwell In Our Hearts Through Faith.* Vs 17a

Paul isn't talking here about that initial reality of Christ living in our heart and life. True for everyone that knows Him What he is addressing here is the reality of Christ being "at home" in our life!

I go to a lot of place that I stay...but there is only one place I "dwell"

Illus: It is the feeling we get when we have been on a long trip and we lie down in our own room...own bed!

- **Dwell:** *To take up permanent residence (to make Himself at home!)*
One commentator I read said, He is there...but for Him to be "at home" requires a "good deal of fixing!"
We know that Jesus is with us...but here is the question: Is He "at home"

Applic: My Heart Christ's Home

Robert Munger

Pg 23

Prayer #3: *Paul Prays That We Would Be Rooted And Established In Love.* Vs 17b

These are two very different concepts, but they both address the same truth. They speak to what keeps us solid and strong They talk about the foundation on which we stand and the source of our strength.

- **Rooted: (in love)** Paul is saying in order to stand strong under the pressures of life, we need a source of strength that is sufficient to help us withstand the storms: It is the Love God has for us!
Psalm 1: We are so "planted" (rooted) in the confidence of God's love can't be moved
We were planted when we came to Him...and continue to strong as we draw from Him
- **Established: (In love)** When we came to Him in confession and forgiveness, we were "founded on the rock!"
Paul earlier in the letter said Jesus was the cornerstone..the foundation all references back to and which everything depends upon.
Mt 16:18 "I will build my church on the rock of faith in me...gates of hell not prevail"

Applic: What Paul is praying for us is that we understand that we have been rooted and grounded...and that we will stay that way...understanding that God's love is the source of strength that we draw upon...even when we don't understand what is going on around us. Sometimes what God allows in our life doesn't FEEL loving...but it is! And as we trust in that love we discover that He is faithful. When the storms come, and the pressure builds..forces our roots down deeper...foundation stronger! Every time the storm comes, if we draw upon His love, His strength, Get closer to Him...Invite Him into another room of our heart and life...we get stronger!

Prayer #4: *Paul Prays That We Can Know And Hold Onto The Love God Has For Us.* Vs 18

This is the part where Paul says, "Listen Church...I am praying that you "get it!"

The love that God has for you is so amazing...so unending...so incredible...that it surpasses anything you can understand! Because of that, I am praying two things for you as it relates to understanding that incredible love.

- **Grasp it:** *To take hold of and appropriate for yourself. Not just to hold, but to OWN!*
- **Know Love:** *The heart knowledge of full experience with God. Not just intellectual, but life experience*

Paul is saying to us, I pray that you truly experientially understand and appropriate the love of God!

That you so completely "Get" how much he loves you, that no matter what comes your way you are never shaken!

Applic: Sometimes when the pressure builds we start to doubt don't we?
We find ourselves waking up in the middle of the night and asking, "God, if you REALLY loved me...why?"
Instead, Paul is saying, Listen, when those times come "I pray that you are able to hold onto God's love for you so completely that you don't doubt for a second! I pray that you KNOW to the very core of your being that God loves you and that He has allowed this for you good. And though you don't understand it and don't see it you trust his love for you and stand strong...rooted...established...in love...Holding onto Him with everything you

5. Prayer #5: Paul Prays That We Are Completely Filled With God! Vs 19

Paul is saying listen, "I want you to be so close to Him that it is hard to figure out where he ends and you begin!"

He is talking here about our lives being transformed so that we become more and more like Jesus.

We see that in the life of the early disciples!

Ac 4:13 "Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marveled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus."

2Co 3:18 "And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit."

All through this letter to the Ephesians Paul has been saying, "Listen, you have been made part of God's family. You have been adopted in...made as much a part of the family as anyone ever could be. And, because you are a part of the family...you should look...and live like it!"

When Paul finishes this prayer he makes a major shift in his writing.
He moves from WHAT GOD HAS DONE FOR US to HOW WE SHOULD LIVE

The only way that is going to be possible is if this prayer is answered in our lives.

He is going to talk about:

- Live a life WORTHY
- Grow into a man or woman of God
- Live Like God's family
- Imitate God
- Family
- Work
- Children
- Spiritual Battles

All of that is only possible as those 5 things Paul prays for become real in our lives.

So, what kind of pressure are you feeling today?

Being crushed...Do you know someone who is?

If so...You know how to pray

CONCL:

Get the inner strength you need to hold up to pressure of life

Jesus be "at home" in your heart

Rooted...Founded...Grounded in the Love of God in your life

Grab onto the love God has for you...hold on

Be filled with God...Be Like Him