



**"I BOW MY KNEES BEFORE THE FATHER"**

EPHESIANS 3:14-16A

*What a man is on his knees before God, that he is, and nothing more.*

—Robert Murray M'Cheyne

Paul's prayer: Because of the supernatural oneness and indwelling of God to create one new humanity, Paul—moved in his heart—prays that (1) super-abundant power be activated in their souls, (2) to the result that their Christ-welcoming and Christ-conforming faith is strengthened (3) causing and creating in them a deeper, fuller, richer, more complete comprehension of the depth, magnitude, and importance of God's love for them shown through Christ, (4) resulting in the Church increasingly becoming the true expression of Christ on earth, to the ultimate effect that (5) God is praised and glorified.

*Scripture teaches us to take every request and need to God—both spiritual and material—while also warning us against the dangerous habit of becoming preoccupied with the material;*

**PHILIPPIANS 4:6-7**

*...in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God...*

**1 PETER 5:6-7**

*Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time he may exalt you, casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you.*

**2 CORINTHIANS 4:16**

*So we do not lose heart. Though our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day.*

**MATTHEW 6:31-34**

*Therefore do not be anxious, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For the Gentiles seek after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.*

*Paul's preoccupation with the spiritual;*

**PHILIPPIANS 1:9-11**

*And it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment, so that you may approve what is excellent, and so be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.*

The Trinitarian nature of the prayer: God, as the great and wise Teacher knows best how to teach His children of Himself, and in His wisdom, He teaches us of Himself as Trinity.

The importance and the unimportance of one's posture in prayer

*Standing before God to pray was, by far, the most common posture;*

**1 KINGS 8:22-23**

*Then Solomon stood before the altar of the LORD in the presence of all the assembly of Israel and spread out his hands toward heaven, and said, "O LORD, God of Israel..."*

**MARK 11:25**

“And whenever you stand praying, forgive...”

**LUKE 18:11**

The Pharisee, *standing by himself*, prayed thus...

*Kneeling before God to pray was not uncommon, and seemed to indicate: (1) An intensified need, and/or (2) a specific recognition of God's global authority;*

**LUKE 22:41**

And he withdrew from them...and *knelt down and prayed*,

**ACTS 21:5**

...and they all, with wives and children, accompanied us until we were outside the city. *And kneeling down on the beach, we prayed.*

**EZRA 9:5**

And at the evening sacrifice I rose from my fasting, with my garment and my cloak torn, and *fell upon my knees* and spread out my hands to the LORD my God...

**PHILIPPIANS 2:10** (see Isaiah 45:23)

...so that at the name of Jesus *every knee should bow*, in heaven and on earth and under the earth...

*We speak to God with our mouths, hearts, and bodies. We can pray in any posture, but wisdom will dictate certain times in which a more reverent and submissive posture are appropriate;*

*Is God really the Father of 'every' family?;*

πᾶσα = “all”;

**MATTHEW 11:28**

Come to me, *all* who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

πᾶσα = “every”;

**JOHN 15:2**

*Every* branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away, and *every* branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit.

πᾶσα = “whole, entire”;

**MATTHEW 8:32**

And he said to them, “Go.” So they came out and went into the pigs, and behold, the *whole* herd rushed down the steep bank into the sea...

**ACTS 20:27**

...for I did not shrink from declaring to you the *whole* counsel of God.

**COLOSSIANS 2:9**

For in him the *whole* fullness of deity dwells bodily...

*The Christian must take care to avoid confusing the world, whose father is not God;*

**JOHN 8:44**

*You are of your father the devil*, and your will is to do your father's desires...When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a liar and the father of lies.

*In Scripture, naming was a means of: exercising dominion and creating one's character;*

**GENESIS 1:5**

God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night...

**GENESIS 1:28, 2:19**

And God blessed them. And God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and *subdue it, and have dominion*...Now out of the ground the LORD God had formed every beast of the field and every bird of the heavens and brought them to the man to see what *he would call them. And whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name.*

**GENESIS 25:26**

Afterward his brother came out with his hand holding Esau's heel, so *his name was called Jacob.*

**GENESIS 35:10**

And God said to him, "Your name is Jacob; no longer shall your name be called Jacob, but Israel shall be your name." So he called his name Israel.

**1 SAMUEL 25:25**

Let not my lord regard this worthless fellow, Nabal, for as his name is, so is he. Nabal is his name, and folly is with him...

*God "names" His whole family, and by so doing, gives us our new character in Christ;*

**EPHESIANS 5:1**

Therefore be imitators of God, *as beloved children.*

*The vast difference between "according to" and "out of." We come to the Father as the blessed asking for blessing, not as the destitute begging for sustenance;*

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**Questions for Midweek**

Take an honest assessment of your pre-occupation with either the material or with the spiritual. Look at your prayer life and—with transparency before God—ask yourself which preoccupies your prayers: the physical or the spiritual.

Consider our comments regarding the Trinitarian nature of the prayer. How practical or real is the Trinitarian nature of God in your understanding of God? Have you considered the Trinity as little more than a "litmus test" of true faith, or is it to you a doctrine of importance and great help? Do you think your grasp of God would be clearer if the Trinitarian nature of God were more forefront in your understanding?

Reflect upon your habit of referring to/not referring to all people as "God's children." Being a common practice, do you see it as confusing and harmful, or welcoming and helpful, and why?

Meditate upon your own heart as you make petitions to God in prayer. Would you characterize yourself as "the blessed asking for blessing" or "the destitute begging for sustenance"? What are some reasons you feel that God wants us to think of ourselves as "the blessed"?