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Main Idea: We have the God Who asks us to come to Him. He lives in and around us. Therefore, we can worship Him as Lord, pray to Him, and surrender our life to Him. He is our Lord and Savior. We can pray not just for ourselves, but for others, too. We can lift them in prayer that God might strengthen them and bestow upon them provision from God's mighty and vast treasures. We can pray for the strength and vitality of the Church, for our churches, for family, friends, and fellow members, and for neighbors who need to know. We need to grasp the wonder of exactly Who our Lord Jesus Christ is. We need to know Christ who suffered mercilessly, who went through false accusations, sufferings and rejection, all and only because He chose obedience to the Father on our behalf. We must know Christ, the King of Kings, Who seeks us to be His love producers, His change agents, the presenters of the wonder of His message, His Gospel all with kindness and care. We can pray for Christ to dwell powerfully within us all, in our hearts, will, physicality and mindfulness. We can pray that He sends His Holy Spirit powerfully and passionately all in the formation and the fullness of His love that flows in and through us to those around us. Let us not just imagine our lives and churches transformed, let us be living and working in His power and keep making it so for His Glory.

Contexts and Background:

Paul gives a petition in prayer to God, that He will pay attention and hear his passionate prayer for the Church to be sanctified for His glory and we receive and properly use the power of the Holy Spirit (Psalm 17:1; 55:1-2). In the Old Testament, servants of God were given glimpses and parts of the Holy Spirit working in them, empowering them for a specified function. Now, through Christ, we have this power at all times and places. How sad it would be to not realize and partake of His empowerment (Gen. 41:38; Num. 27:18; Acts 2:33; 16:6-7; Rom. 8:9-10; 1 Cor. 15:45; Gal. 4:6; Phil. 1:19; 1 Pet. 4:14).

Commentary—Word and Phrase Meanings:

- *Kneel before the Father.* This is the response to the Father to bow down and worship God and acknowledge who we are--people in sin, children of a fallen humanity, unworthy of anything yet loved and saved by the power of Jesus Christ. Jewish prayers were done by standing; the Greeks stretched out their arms in the air when kneeling--a more humble and passionate response. To grow in our faith and have an impact, we have to realize the Sovereignty of God and the depravity of humanity (1 Kings 8:14-54; Ez. 9:5; Psalm 95:6-7; Matt. 6:5; Luke 18:11-13).
- *Every/whole family.* This is everyone! None are outside of God's call! It is about His riches and His glory! For the ultimate secret, what is foolishness to those who are not in Him, is that the God of the universe is living in us, employing us, empowering us, and loving us. He is our assurance, so let us share this great joy and never let it be a secret! We are called to share His glory and Truth! Do this with warmth, kindness, and in truth (Acts 3:25; 2 Cor. 4:16; Col. 1:24-29).
- *I pray.* Paul was "practicing His presence," as faith and trust and a commitment to obey are the marks of a person who loves and honors God. When we pray, we commune with God, with not just words of want, but with praise to Him for all He is doing and can do in our lives. Prayer is to be conformed to His likeness, to perceive before we receive. The key to a successful Christian life, ministry, and the church is prayer. There is no way around it (Psalm 2:7; 5; John 12:41; Philip. 2:11).

- *Glorious riches.* This means we, as Christians, have the indwelling of Christ in us now, and we have a future glory, too! The coming of the Messiah, which was prophesied, has now come; we can partake of Him. Because of this, we possess astounding riches, opportunities, and blessings (Isa. 42:6; 45:21; 49:6; 52:10; 60:1-3; Psalm 22:27; 65:5; 98:2-3; John 14:23; Rom. 8:11; Gal. 2:20; Eph. 1:7, 13-18; 3:8-19; Col. 1:27; 1 Pet. 1:3-4).
- *Strengthen.* God is our source of power and ability. We are anchored in our faith and hope in Christ! If we are not anchored in Christ, our hearts will deceive us by sin. We are to have discipline, solid doctrine, correct thinking, and not be drawn to false teaching or faulty trends. God's plans and faithfulness transcend what we know and see (Psalm 18:1-2; 27:1; 59:17; 119:28; Jer. 16:19; Matt. 24:14; 28:19-20; Mark 16:15; Acts 1:8; Rom. 1:8, 14-16; 2 Cor. 10:5; Phil. 1:6-9; Col. 1:4-11; 24-27; 1 Thess. 1:8; 2 Thess. 1:3)!
- *With power/might.* This is empowerment from the Holy Spirit. The God of the universe is living in us, employing us, empowering us, and loving us. Subsequently, we will see our responsibility to care for His church properly and faithfully. His message will be pronounced and proclaimed through us (Jer. 12:5; Matt. 28:20; Luke 11:13; John 14:17; Acts 1:8; 4:3; 10:45; 19:1-2; Rom. 8:1-11; 12:1-2; 1 Cor. 6:19-20; 15:10, 58; 2 Cor. 5:17; Gal. 5:13-26, Eph. 3:16-17; Col. 1:11,29; Heb. 13:5-6; Rev. 3:20)!
- *Inner being... hearts.* This refers to the *heart* of who we are. It comes from our spirit or soul and consists of the emotions, thoughts, strength of prowess, and motivations which flow through to our mindset and actions. When we become a Christians, an incredible wondrous renewal of our action of heart and mind comes into us as we receive Christ's work and gift of grace and are released from a guilty conscience. Our *hearts* become grateful and focused; we are more about who Christ is and what He has done. We can we have freedom and purpose because of His once-for-all sacrifice. So, we can fulfil our call (Ex. 15:2; Psalm 4; 32:7-9; 34:1-8; 119: 11; Proverbs 4:23; 15:13; John 15:11; 17:13; Rom. 1:8-15; 1 Cor. 11:4; 2 Cor. 12:9; Phil. 1:3; Col. 1:3; 1 Peter 4:13- 19; 1 Thess. 1:2; 5:18; 2 Thess. 1:3; 2 Tim. 3:1; Philemon 4; Heb 10:34; James 1:1-4).
- *Dwell.* This is a Greek term meaning, "*where a god chooses to go or a place to live*". Here it also refers to, "*dwelling, as in our heart is Christ's home*", as God dwells in the Temple and in us. vThe Tabernacle, God's dwelling place prior to the Temple being built, was about God dwelling amongst man, being with them. vThis was to show the Promised Land was not just about the possession of the land; rather, it was about God possessing our hearts and minds. We can't possess God. It is He who desires to possess us. It is about being humble, so we are dependent upon Him and His dwelling amongst us, as we are full in Him (2 Chron. 7:1-18; Eph. 2:16; Col. 1:19-23; 1 Tim. 2:5; Heb. 1:8)!
- *Rooted.* This is an agricultural image meaning God is the planter and Farmer; we are to take root in Him, meaning we are to obey Him. We have to grow by learning and applying and sharing God's principles and love. This was also a Jewish metaphor for receiving God's blessing for being obedient. If they followed God, He would allow the people to take root in the promised land (Ruth 4:11; Psalm 28:5; 51:18; 69:35; 147:2; Jer. 1:10; 18:7; 24:6; 31:4; 45:4; 1 Cor. 3:5-17; Eph. 3:17; Col 2:6-10).
- *Established.* This also means we have a vital union with Christ, and our call is to be united with other believers, cooperating together. Accepting Christ as Lord and Savior is the primary platform and only entrance to salvation and the practice of Christianity (1 Cor. 15:1-5; Col. 2:6-10; 1 Thess. 2:13).

- *In love.* This is a fruit of faith and shows our authenticity, which allows us to serve. It lives in the present as it looks outward to others (John 3:16; 1 Cor. 13; Col. 1:4-13; 1 John 3:14; James 2:14).
- *Wide /breath, deep is the love of Christ.* This is referring to God's dwelling in the Temple, meaning that all of creation is filled with God's presence. This is also about the inexhaustible, immeasurable vastness and sacrificing of His love and care (Eph. 2:18-22; 1 Pet. 2:5).
- *Fullness of God.* This normally refers to God's wisdom, attributes, and glory, giving us completeness--His presence amongst us and in us. Paul used it to describe God's indwelling as Christ is all! He is full, and He is the ultimate Wisdom and Truth. This means God fully dwelt in Christ. For us, this means we are filled with Christ and ruled by Christ. Placing Christ and His work first in us, so we are pursuing righteousness and all that is good as a way to glorify Christ as Lord. *Fullness* equals personally knowing for certain who we are in Christ, and what He did for us on the Cross so that our confidence comes from knowing we are complete in Him! As a result, we become more disciplined in His encompassing power. His influence has transformed us and is now manifested in us. I can trust in my Lord to lead me, *fill* me, and use me (Psalm 40:17; Joel 2:26; Matt. 5: 6; 6:33-34; John 1:16; 3:5; 4:13-14; 6:35; Gal. 2:20-21; 4:4; 5:15-21; Eph. 3:19; 5:15-21; Col. 1:1-23; 2:9-10; 2 Tim. 1:12; James 1:22-25; 1 John 4:19).
- *Amen.* This mean "so be it," and "most assuredly". It is a blessing we give back to God. We proclaim the affirmation of His Truth and ways. This also refers to a title for Christ as "the God of Truth." Christ is the promise arrived as Isaiah prophesied that a remnant from among the nations would return to God (Psalm 106:48; Isa. 42:6; 49:6; 52:15; 65:16; Amos 6:12; Matt. 5:20-48; John 15:5; 21: 24; Rom. 1:7; 15:8; 2 Cor. 1:20; 5:10; Gal. 5:22-23; Eph. 1:6, 12, 14; 2:10; Phil. 1:9-11; 1 Thess. 3:12; 4:10; 2 Thess. 1:3; Heb 12:11; James 1:22-25; 3:18; Rev. 3:14)!

Devotional Thoughts and Applications:

The purpose of the Christianity is not having Christ to serve us; rather, we to serve Christ for HIS glory, for the glory of God the Father. Through this service, the Church is collectively built and made known. The "coming of the Kingdom" in the Old Testament meant that a new stage in God's redemptive plan was coming--CHRIST. For us, it means declaring our personal identification and relationship to our Lord and Savior before we dare communicate it to others! Then, we will see the riches of his immeasurable love working with us as individuals and collectively as a church. We will know our calling and be responding to it. We will be loving and responding to it. Our need is to bow to His Lordship for our betterment and growth! This will keep us going on the right path through that dark, foreboding jungle of the pandemonium of church life!

Church Leadership Tip: Do you know that your church can do immeasurably more? The church is established in love, by love for love. So do we love well? Do we do more? We must pray that His glorious riches strengthen us, work in us, so we love and do as He has called! Worship Christ, grow in Christ, serve Christ and model Christ.

The Essential Inductive Questions (for more Inductive questions, see Inductive Bible Study):

1. What does this passage say?
2. What does this passage mean?
3. What is God telling me?
4. How am I encouraged and strengthened?
5. Is there sin in my life for which confession and repentance is needed?

6. How can I be changed, so I can learn and grow?
7. What is in the way of these precepts affecting me? What is in the way of my listening to God?
8. How does this apply to me? What will I do about it?
9. What can I model and teach?
10. What does God want me to share with someone?

Additional Questions:

1. How does it make you feel that you were established in love?
2. How can we worship and praise God, and then hate our neighbor?
3. How can we kneel down in prayer, but not take the time for the people around us?
4. How have you bowed down and worship Who God is? How does this help us acknowledge who we are, people in sin?
5. How does trust in Jesus fuel your Christian life?
6. How does this trust help form a commitment to obey so you are a person who loves and honors God?
7. What are some of the astounding riches, opportunities, and blessings you possess? Keep in mind they are not always material.
8. What would happen to your church if you respond collectively to the calling?
9. What can you do to help the responding, actually seeking our Lord's hope and riches?
10. What is a love that surpasses knowledge? How will that help you be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God? What would your life look like?
11. If we sit and hear the teachings of our Lord and then do nothing with it, we are in fact practicing atheism and not Christianity! So, what does your church now need to do?
12. Make a commitment to pray that Christ's glorious riches be strengthened you and your church. How can you make this so?