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Upper Thames Missionary Church
Easter 4

Powerful Prayer
Ephesians 3:14-21

Jesus warned them: “Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. 5 For John baptized with a water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.” Acts 1:4-5

**But how many of you today still feel powerless sometimes?
Does it mean that God's Holy Spirit isn't with you?**

So if you have the promised Holy Spirit, yet still feel powerless.... What's the deal?

every second of every day we are constantly forgetting and getting distracted and going back to our old ways.

We are fallen humans. That means salvation is not simply one and done.
Salvation is an ongoing process every day.

In colossians chapter one verse 13 Paul says “For he has rescued us from the kingdom of darkness and transferred us into the Kingdom of his dear Son”

We have a new citizenship and identity when we are saved.

We are not however instantly new in our attitude behavior and character.

This is why we need someone to help us. We cannot do life on our own.

And it is this:

Prayer and blessing involve your heart, your mind, and your body.

In the ancient world when Paul is writing and in fact in most of Christianity in every culture for the past 2000 years, prayer has been communal and physical.

Something actual in the powerful life of prayer and blessing is missing if we don't actually pray for each other in the presence of one another and physically make that prayer come into reality.

First of all I want you to notice how Paul begins this prayer:

I kneel before the father.

For most of the history of the church when the church has gathered together you know what they have done,

Indeed scripture is clear he's given us bodies with which to pray as well as words. Perhaps the most famous prayer in scripture is Daniel- Because Darius signed the decree that forbid praying to anyone but him.

10 Now when Daniel learned that the document had been signed, he went into his house, where the windows of his upper room opened toward Jerusalem, and three times a day he got down on his knees, prayed, and gave thanks to his God, just as he had done before. Daniel 5:10ff

And in addition to bending your knee, There are two other physical acts of prayer that are assumed to be part of the prayer life of the church in the New Testament:

2. Lifting up your hands

I Paul's first letter to Timothy he says: **Therefore I want the men everywhere to pray, lifting up holy hands without anger or disputing.** Timothy 2:8

3. Laying on hands

In acts 6:6 the apostles chose several men to serve in the church and it says **"These they set before the apostles, and they prayed and laid their hands on them."**

I have no doubt that if Paul had been able to be with the Christians in emphasis there would have been laying on of hands and lifting up of hands in prayer as well as kneeling!

how Isaac was blessing Jacob:

he drew him close so he could hear the tone of his voice.

And Jacob kissed his father Isaac.

Isaac put his hands on Jacob and he could feel his skin.

Isaac could smell him because he was embracing him.

That's what a blessing looks like.

And Paul, kneeling before the father in his jail cell asks for these three things:

3 "Thats"

1. **That the Father will powerfully strengthen Your inner Being, through his Spirit, which is Christ dwelling in your hearts, rooting and building you in love**
There is an amazing moving inward and then moving outward of this first blessing.

Then Paul prays:

2. **That you may comprehend—(With all the saints!—the vast love of Christ**

Remember what I said before you cannot do this alone! Even in this blessing Paul binds us together to receive it. You can grasp the height and breadth and length and depth of the love of Christ **only together with all the Saints. We stand as one!**

Finally Paul prays:

3. **That you may be filled with God's fullness**

we can't begin to comprehend the fullness of God yet by his grace that which we cannot comprehend is still ours through faith.

If God is asked you to put it on your heart to pray for

Ask if it's OK for you to pray for them maybe put your hand on their shoulder.

Maybe you can pray for a family member and can hold their hand or put your arm around them.

Some of you really feel like you need to be bending your knee before the father.

If you're able, please kneel, or bow before Him.

God is nudging some of you to lift up your hands in prayer right now. Just do it.

Pray Ephesians 3:14-21 out loud.

Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.