

## Ephesians 3:14-21

**An introduction to the reading:** In our epistle lesson the author, in the language of praise, expresses fervent hope that the community of the church might know the rich abundance of God's indwelling Spirit. There is a power and wisdom which comes only from Christ, surpassing all knowledge. The blessing of knowing Christ exceeds all that can be imagined, and will be at work for every generation of those who are, through faith, members of Christ Jesus and his church. Hear now these words from Ephesians.

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

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, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever! Amen.

This is the word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

## Matthew 6:5-15

“And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you. And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words. Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.

“This, then, is how you should pray:

“Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. And forgive us our debts,

as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from the evil one.

For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.

This is the word of the Lord. **May the reading and the hearing of your word inform our minds, comfort our souls and guide our feet.**