

Ephesians 3:14-17 - OUR FATHER

Intro - After 2 weeks focusing on other important matters today we re-engage with Ephesians. We pick back up in a prayer. This is the 2nd prayer in this letter, and both prayers were prayed for the same reason. The apostle has been reminding the redeemed of all the blessings they have in Christ, and he prays that they might know & experience these blessings in a fuller way. The prayer is instructive, but we note today how he begins the prayer which is also instructive. There is a **Posture** to this prayer that shows the proper attitude in prayer. There is a **Patriarch** that is addressed in prayer with this submissive posture. But there is also a **Pattern** in prayer that applies not only to our prayer-life but to all of life. This pattern defines family, and it orders society. But this divine pattern is despised & distorted by sinful society in both extremes. Sinful men distort this pattern with *chauvinism* & sinful women distort this pattern with *feminism*. But, this pattern is stamped upon creation ... because this pattern is a reflection of the Creator. There is a pattern of family within the Persons of Trinity, and it is a pattern we should follow. Prayer reminds us of this pattern. We were made to reflect God's image that is seen within the relationship of Father, Son & Holy Spirit. Proper praying is a picture of proper living. The way we are to pray reminds us how we were made. *A Posture. A Patriarch. A Pattern.*

A POSTURE

1. There are several different postures for prayer mentioned in scripture.
 - a. Standing - sitting - lying down - looking up - face between knees - hands raised - 1 Tim. 2:8
 - b. There is not one set posture for prayer.
2. Eph. 3:14
 - a. *Bowing the kneeskneeling* Daniel employed this posture - Dan. 6:10
3. The posture of kneeling pictures the proper attitude we are to have in praying.
 - a. Humility, submission, reverence, respect, honor. (it is more about attitude than altitude)
 - b. *Bowing the head & bending the knee* reminds us that we are asking, not demanding.
 - i. We are to lower ourselves before the High & Exalted One.
 - c. Prayer is a revertant act of supplication and submission by a subordinate.
 - d. Kneeling & bowing in prayer pictures the **submission & authority** dynamic.

A PATRIARCH

- Notice who is knelt before. Eph. 3:14
 - The Father is The One who is bowed to....submitted to.... and prayed to
- When Jesus taught us to pray, He used this same formula and relationship dynamic
 - Matt. 6:9
 - Prayer is to be addressed to *The Father* and in a respectful manner - "*Hallowed...*"
- Father = "*pater*" in Greek Patriarch
 - Patriarch = "*Father rules*" The Father is the authority figure
 - The posture in prayer reminds us of *The Patriarch* - Authority/submission dynamic
- To speak of a "*Patriarchy*" makes our society uneasy. There is a fight against The Father

- The fight against the patriarchy is a fight against *The Father*...the family within Trinity.

A PATTERN

- ❖ Eph. 4:14-15 The concept of "family" comes from the Trinity and gives the idea for patriarchy
 - God the Father defines family....every family in heaven or on earth
 - Father = "*pater*" Family = "*patria*" Father defines family
- ❖ There is a pattern within the 3 Persons of the 1 God that defines family – stamped on society
 - There is hierarchy within the Trinity - an *Authority / Submission* dynamic
 - God has revealed Himself to us as Father & Son in relationship.
 - There is beauty in authority and there is beauty in submission. equal beauty
 - The Father is the authority....He *gives* the Son and *sends* the Son
 - The Son is *sent* by the Father, and the Son *obeys* the Father. - Father's business
 - The Son *prays* to the Father and *submits* Himself to the Father...
 - The Father & Son are one – John 10:30...
 - But the Father is greater than the Son - John 14:28
 - The Son does not send the Father nor does the Father pray to the Son for that would be out of order. The proper order is: *Father, Son & Holy Spirit*
 - The Son & Spirit pray to the Father. Authority/Submission dynamic
 - Rom. 8:26 Rom. 8:34
 - All three in Trinity are equal in power and glory.
 - *Father* - glory in authority. *Son* - glory in submission to His *Father*
 - *Spirit* - glory in submission to *Father & Son*. Glory in hierarchy/patriarchy
 - It is all rooted and grounded in love. God is love – the family in Trinity
 - This prayer is about grasping the immensity of the Triune love. Eph. 3:17-19
- ❖ The pattern of family within the Trinity is one of a loving Patriarchy.
 - This pattern should be followed in family and in society.
 - Fathers should lead in their families. Men should lead in society.
 - This pattern is sinfully distorted by chauvinism.
 - Men should not be domineering or demeaning while leading...(lovingly lead)
 - This pattern is sinfully distorted by feminism.
 - The constant attack on men, masculinity and patriarchy in our society is a fight against the father...God the Father...the family...and the Trinity.
 - God made woman to be man's helper not his usurper.
- ❖ We should repent when we have rebelled against this Divine pattern.
 - Men - God has made you to be a leader and a father to someone. (stamped on soul)
 - If married...then loving lead your wife & kids – your responsibility – man up
 - You don't have to be married with kids to be a father to someone.
 - Find someone to lead...protect...provide...instruct....and love
- ❖ There is a pattern in our prayer-life that should be lived out in all of life...
 - We bow before the Father to ask for: provision, protection, understand His love...
 - Use this posture of humility with the patriarchy in your life
 - The posture in prayer reminds us of the pattern of patriarchy in family/society