



Week 5

The Power and Love of Christ

Memory Verse:

... 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.

Ephesians 3:17(b)-18 (NIV)

PERSONAL STUDY

Read Ephesians 3:14-21

OPENING REMARKS:

Love and power are the themes of perhaps two-thirds of all the novels, plays and poems ever written. The love of power has been the cause of many wars and laid to waste many continents and empires. The power of love has driven weak people to do powerful things. Love and power are the forces which shape our lives, our homes, our countries, our polities and our world.

In this section of Ephesians, Paul is again praying for the congregation. It is a clever idea to compare the two prayers, found in Ephesians 1:15-23 and Ephesians 3:14-21, respectively. The first prayer ends with reference to the power that God invokes in the believers. The second prayer starts with a request that God would equip the believers with power.

The church was not only established by God, but its existence is in God's hands. Therefore, Paul is praying for the church, for power and love.

STUDY QUESTIONS:

Read Ephesians 3:14-15. What is Paul's frame of mind when he prays this prayer for the Ephesians?

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Read Ephesians 3:16-19. What does Paul ask God to do through the power of his Spirit? Try to put the requests in your own words.

Ephesians 3:16-17	
Ephesians 3:18-19	

How or in what way does Christ dwell in our hearts? What is the outcome of that dwelling? (Refer to 1 John 4:12-13)

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In verse 18 Paul describes four dimensions. Of what is he speaking? (Also refer to Romans 8:38-39.)

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Read Ephesians 3:20-21. Verse 20 indicates that God can “do immeasurably more” than all we *ask or image*. How do your prayers reflect your understanding of this verse?

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How can this prayer of Paul help you when:

You do not know what to pray for?	
You begin to think prayer does not work?	
You feel inadequate as a believer?	

You feel unloved?	
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Remember where Paul is when he prays this joyful, hope-filled prayer. How does that both encourage and challenge us as we consider our own lives and prayer lives?

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Using Paul's prayer as a model, write down a prayer in which you intercede for your family and the people in your life.

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Closing remarks:

God is love and His mercy is over all His works. The blessing of His love comes to us not because we deserve it, but because of His sovereign grace.

Many churchgoers are ignorant of the vast spiritual wealth that is theirs in Christ. Believers might have a great deal of knowledge about the Bible and the Christian faith, but they fail to live by these truths.

Having a poor spiritual life, is a tragedy. In the first part of his epistle to the Ephesians, Paul reminded them that the children of God possess riches and resources beyond measure. We have the capacity to experience an abundant life (refer to John 10:10).

In order for God to receive the glory He deserves and in order for us to find the fulfillment and purpose for which we were created, we need God to move in our hearts. We need illumination and motivation, and we only have to ask. God wants us to experience the rich existence that is possible when we are filled with the fullness of God.

GROUP DISCUSSION

Prayer

Memory verse:

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Ephesians 3:17(b)-18 (NIV)

Reflection:

Share with the group members how God worked in your life during this week.

Scripture Reading:

Ephesians 3:14-21 and Romans 8:31-39

Discussion questions

Read Ephesians 3:14-15. Power and love are the themes that run through this great prayer that Paul prays for the church. What was Paul's frame of mind when he prays this prayer? Why is it significant? Discuss in the group.

Read Ephesians 3:16. Paul asks that God would strengthen them and empower them in their inner beings. What does it mean to be strengthened in your inner being? What resources does God have to do this? Discuss.

Read Ephesians 3:17. What are Paul's next prayer request for the Ephesians? What characterizes someone in which King Jesus dwells? (Refer to 1 John 4:12-13.)

Read Ephesians 3:18-19. Paul prays that they will know God's love. How does he describe that love? (Refer to Romans 8: 38-39.)

How can a fuller understanding of God's love have influence in the way we interact with other, how we view ourselves and how we live? Discuss in the group.

Remember where Paul is when he prays this joyful, hope-filled prayer. How does that both encourage and challenge us as we consider our own lives and prayer lives? Discuss in the group.

Close in prayer