

Studying the Letter to the Ephesians

Ephesians is about learning to let who we are in Christ, shape how we perform in life.

Ephesians Study 6 (⊕ 50 min.)



Warm Up (⊕ 6 min.)

1. Greeting / Welcome

2. Prayer Requests (try to balance the amount of time between prayer and / or testimony by limiting the amount of prayer requests and/or time for testimony sharing.)

3. Testimony Sharing (*Optional* - prior to the group study time, ask one person to share for 3-5 minutes on how the recent truths being studied have impacted their life. Remember: *authenticity is the key* - What have you (or a group member you've asked to testify) shared lately that gives insight into your journey? Try to share things pertaining to the recent themes of the study.)



Overview of Today's Study (⊕ 1 min.)

Text: Turn to Eph. 3:14-21

Lesson Title: *Spiritual Power in a Physical World*

Lesson Theme: *Paul tells the Ephesians of his prayer request for their spirits to be energized by the Holy Spirit and that they would have an in-depth understanding of Christ's love.*

By the End of the Study today, we want to be able to answer:

Today's Key Question 🔑










How can Christians today, tap into the infinite power of the Holy Spirit who lives in them?

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- Lesson Outline:**
1.  Connecting the Studies
 2.  Bible Passage Study
 - a.  Set the Context
 - b.  Study Topic
 3.  Group Discussion
 4.  Review / Preview and  Key Question

1. **Connecting the Studies** (⊕ 5 min.)

In today's study, we will review how Paul wraps up his teaching on our spiritual identity with his prayer request for the Ephesian believers.

In the first three chapters of his letter to the Ephesians, Paul has detailed some very core truths about the spiritual make up of all Christians, a.k.a. "holy ones", or a "saints".

In chapter 1, we studied how each member of the Godhead had a role in the believer's spiritual rebirth and new identity in Christ.

We also saw that *God* has relentlessly pursued humanity through the ages to have relationship with anyone who would believe. Also, if we're not careful, we can miss God "showing" Himself to us on a daily basis.

In chapter 2, we saw what we were before accepting Christ: dead to God but alive to the world, the devil, and our own sinful habits. Our new blueprint in Christ was designed for performance that would please God.

A new kind of unity among human kind was established in Christ. No longer was there any separation between Jew and non-Jew. All believers are united in Christ.

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In chapter 3, we studied how Christ leveled the playing field for people enabling all believers to have *equal access* to God.

We were also challenged to let our unity in Christ and our future citizenship in heaven bring us together in our church families here and now. Our allegiance to the Body of Christ, the Church, should outweigh all other loyalties and should cause an inherent desire to be actively participating in the ministry of the local church family.

2. **Bible Passage Study** (⊕ 20 min.)



Set the Context Turn to Eph. 3:14-21

As he prepares to shift the focus of his teaching from *identity* to *performance*, he closes this section of his letter with a prayer request for those at Ephesus. Paul is fully aware of the reality of the spiritual forces at work against God's children. The apostle wants to ensure that Christians understand that experiencing the power of the Holy Spirit in their lives here in the physical world is a relationship based activity.

At the very center of God's power in the Christian's life is a practical and deep understanding of Christ's absolute love for us. Responding to His love by developing the spiritual relationship we have with Him will have an evident effect on the way we live life now.

Read Eph. 3:14-21

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Study Topic for Today

Paul's Prayer Request for the Ephesians – Eph. 3:14-21

A. What do these verses tell us? Eph. 3:14-21

1. In the first three chapters of Ephesians, Paul gave an in-depth explanation of the new identity that every believer has been given in Christ. Paul now summarizes this portion of his letter by telling the Ephesians that he has a two part prayer request for them based on their new identity in Jesus.

2. The first part of Paul's prayer request is that the Ephesian believers would be strengthened in their **inner person** with **might**.



3. The second part of Paul's prayer request is that the Ephesians would have an **in-depth** understanding of Christ's **love**.



B. What do these verses mean? 3:14-21

Paul is very aware of two needs all believers will have while they're here on the physical earth.

a. The first need is for strengthening with specialized power in the believers' spirits. Because power sources in the physical creation are under the curse of the fallen world, Christians need a power supply that can't run out. The power source Paul mentions for inner person strengthening is unique to anything the physical world has to offer.

In fact this specialized power is so unique, Paul was inspired by the Holy Spirit to use a specific Greek word to depict what kind of power he was requesting for the Ephesians. There are three different words in the Greek language for might or power.

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- i. Paul did not use the word *kratos*, which means power, strength or might in deeds or feats of strength.
- ii. Paul did not use the Greek word *ischus* which also means power, might or the ability of an individual.
- iii. Paul used the word ***dunamis***. This is the word we get our word dynamite from and it is translated as power, might, miracle and virtue. *Dunamis* carries more meaning than just strength or ability.

Dunamis is built-in power a person exerts or puts forth, which resides in a person as a result of their association with God. *Dunamis* is related to the power for performing miracles and the source for moral strength and excellence of soul. Paul asks God to unleash *dunamis*, an **unlimited power** in the Ephesian believers.



- b. The second need Paul is aware of is for all believers to have a deep, experiential understanding of Christ's love.** It is the understanding of Christ's unconditional love that can hinder or open up the power flow that Paul so wanted to see unleashed in the lives of the Ephesians.


C. How should this impact our lives? 3:14-21

- 1. I need to understand there is real power available to me and it is built in as a result of the Holy Spirit's sealing.** I must believe what the Bible teaches about God's power in my life and realize that anything God wants me to change or accomplish can be done by this power.
- 2. I need to learn how to release His power in my life.** Since each believer has power available to perform, I am responsible to learn how to permit it to flow into this world.

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3.  Group Discussion (⊕ 15 min.) Based on the time remaining, here are some suggested discussion questions. You may or may not have time enough for all of them.

(Try to facilitate the group's discussion and not do most of the talking during this time.)


1. What's the connection between good fellowship with God and power in the life of the Christian? Good quality of fellowship with God permits His blessing on our lives. The opposite is also true.

2. So the quality of our relationship with God is important? Yes.

3. How do we improve a relationship with a person here on earth?

- Spend time doing things together
- Spend time talking with them – listening and speaking
- Try not to wrong each other or hurt each other – raise their interests above our own

4. How do we improve our relationship with Jesus Christ who is with us spiritually and not physically at this time?

- I must *raise my awareness* of His presence with me during the day.
- I can *talk, write* and/or pray in *thought* to Christ. 
- I receive His half of the conversation to me by *reading, hearing or remembering* His words that have been recorded in the Bible.

Exposure to the truth combined with the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit stimulates new thought processes. Our intellect, emotion, and will are brought into unity with God's will which will release His power flow in our lives.

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4. ⇌ Review / Preview (⊕ 3 min.) (What is the group learning to do that they can repeat when they are away from the group or this study is completed?)

🔑 If You Forget Everything Else, Remember...

How can Christians today, tap into the infinite power of the Holy Spirit who lives in them?

As Christians **pursue** their relationship with Christ, their thoughts, feelings, and choices become **driven** by the **truth** they are exposed to.



Getting Ready for Next Week

1. **How's your alone time with God?** Prayer & Bible Reading
2. 🗝️ **Key question for next week's study:**

How does a church maintain unity as differing people continue to join it?

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