



Ephesians 3

God's love and power in us – leader's version

For an hour study, just do the starred * questions

Check in – ask everyone, including leaders, how they are and how they're feeling about studying the Bible today.

Paul starts writing a sentence in 3 v 1, then distracts himself and starts talking about something else from v2-13! We'll look at v2-13 second.

1. Yet again, Paul looks back at what he's already said – “For this reason, I Paul... for the sake of you Gentiles...” What has Paul just said? (Think back to previous studies)

The gospel, the unity of the church, being members of God's household.

What does the passage say and mean?

60 minutes

Read Ephesians 3 v 1 & 3 v 14-21

2. What does Paul do “for this reason”? (v14)

Prays for the Ephesians

*3. What does he pray for them (v16-19)?

That God may strengthen them with power through the Holy Spirit living in them (v16). And that they would have power to understand Christ's love and to know it (v18-19), and that this will fill them right up (v19)!

*4. **STICKERS** Where do you tend to get your strength from?

Self, family etc. (referring to emotional / mental strength, endurance, coping etc). Think about the positive aspects of how self, family etc give us strength.

*5. Read v16. Where do Christians get their strength from?

Following on from the thoughts of Q4, Christians have extra strength – from God.

6. What kind of strength is this? (v18)

Not strength to do the impossible. It's power to understand the love of Jesus – we need God to help us understand God's love!

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Can you remember a time when God gave you strength to get through something?

Questions 7-9 are **SELF-DIRECTED QUESTIONS**. You need to write them on flip-chart sheets for the group to work on in pairs.

*7. **SDL** Read Ephesians 3 v 17. What does it mean to be rooted and established in God's love?

All Christians are rooted and established in God's love. This means that we are set firmly in God's love, we can't fall out of it, and we will grow because of it (think of a plant analogy if it helps).

*8. **SDL** Read Ephesians 3 v 18-19. How big is Christ's love?

It is too big for us to understand, even with the Holy Spirit helping us – God's love is too big for our brains to comprehend. Thankfully, God's love for us is not measured by our understanding of how much He loves us. He wants us to grow in understanding, so that we know just how much we are loved and so that we love Him more and more, but He loves us immeasurably however good our understanding of it.

*9. **SDL** How much of His love is God willing to give us? (v19)

All of it – v18 – 'that we may be filled to the measure of all the fulness of God' - God holds nothing back.

*10. Read Zephaniah 3 v 17. How does God feel about you?

God delights in us and is rejoicing over us with singing!

*11. Read God's promise to Joshua in Joshua 1 v 5. What does God promise him, and you?

That he will never leave nor forsake him / us.

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What difference does it make to you to know that God loves you this much?

*12. How much of our hearts / our love should we give to God? (see Mark 12 v 30)

All of it. (This doesn't mean that we stop loving family etc, just that we love God even more than family etc)

*13. Do you find this easy? Why / why not?

Discuss, then explain that the root problem is sin. As in Mark 12 v 30-31, we should love God with all of everything, but as Mark 7 v 21-23 tells us, we are all sinners, and this is why we find it so hard to love God with all of everything.

14. Read Ephesians 3 v 20. What are the limits of God's power?

There are no limits – we can't even imagine what God can do!

*15. What power is at work in Christian believers? (v20) What does it mean to have this power at work in us?

God's power is at work in us! We are told in v19-20 that God's power at work in us is the power of the resurrection! This means that immeasurably more than we could imagine could happen in our lives (as long as it's within God's will). Make sure the group understand that this doesn't mean that God will say yes to every prayer – we are not to treat God's power like a slot-machine.

*16. **STICKERS** Often, our prayers are not answered in the way we thought they would be. Why do you think this is?

Because God answers prayers in order to bring glory to His name, not to ours. God answers prayers in line with His will, which may not be in line with our will! But He knows and does what is best for us.

The digression – Read Ephesians 3 v 2-13

17. What is the mystery that has been revealed to Paul (v6)?

That the Gentiles (non-Jews) are also able to be saved by Jesus' death – Jesus didn't just come for the Jews (in the NT, 'mystery' doesn't mean something unsolvable – it means 'a truth revealed').

Before he became a Christian, Paul was a 'perfect Jew' – he was a Pharisee, from the tribe of Benjamin and he persecuted Christians because he disagreed with them so much (Acts 26 v 9-11). All these things tell us how strong his Jewish faith was. But now look at what God is doing through him by the time he writes to the Ephesians. God can turn your life around radically too. Nothing is too big for God – see Ephesians 3 v 20!

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What area of your life do you think God wants to change? Have you asked Him for help?

You may need to make some suggestions – addiction, a broken relationship, lifestyle of crime etc. Try to give some suggestions of how they can get the help they need to start addressing these things – God works through courses and programmes too!

*18. Do you believe that God can change your life and are you prepared to let Him?

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Can you identify an area of your life that you are keeping back from God at the moment? Can you hand it over to God, or at least start praying for Him to help you to hand it over?

(It might be helpful to tell the group that you will remind them of these things during the next session and hold them accountable for action on these points).

Check out – ask everyone, including leaders, how they found the study and if they are safe to go back to the cell.



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