

WHO AM I?

“PRAYER FOR SPIRITUAL STRENGTH” (Ephesians 3:14-21)

Community Group Curriculum for the week of November 23, 2014

Big Picture

Paul had fallen to his knees before the Lord for the Ephesians. He prays for their strength, their love, and their fullness. Just as the ill and infirm need to be strengthened so they can take in all life has to offer, so also God's children need to be inwardly strengthened to receive all the blessings God desires for them. This prayer for inner strengthening was not a mere wish, but a petition. Paul demonstrates the kind of prayer we should have for ourselves and for our church.

Let's Explore Together!

Read Ephesians 3:14-21 aloud as a group.

1. In his prayer, Paul desires three things from the Triune God for his readers; each petition begins with *hina*, “in order that.” Though not completely clear in English, here they are: v. 16, v. 18, v. 19b. What are the three petitions? Put each petition in your own words and share with your group.

How do you think these three petitions relate to one another? Are they restatements of each other, is there some other relationship?

2. What do verses 14 and 15 teach about:

a) Paul's attitude toward God?

b) God's sovereignty?

c) Our identity as Christians?

d) Our relationship to one another?

3. List the prayers that Paul prayed for the Ephesians. Consider these prayers and write down what you need to ask God for in your life.

What Paul prayed for the Ephesians	What I need to ask God for in my life

4. It is hard to believe that we serve a distant God when you read a passage and hear a prayer like this. What is your response to God's closeness? What is your response to God's power at work within you?

In what specific ways do you see God's love and power in your life and in the life of your church?

5. Does your earthly experience of fathers clarify or cloud the metaphor of God as Father? How does knowing that in the Bible "Father" has to do with *origin, love, security* and *care* help you enter into this prayer (and the Lord's Prayer)?
6. How can you overcome the common tendency to function on your own steam instead of the power of the Holy Spirit? Discuss this for a few moments and then take some moments to be silent together, asking God this question. After a few moments, share what came to mind.

Prayer

Add prayer for power to your prayers for one another and for the whole Church. Think about how you can help one another within your group to use the gifts of power and love, and ask God to show you what that looks like.

Final Thoughts

"I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father." John 14:12

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Limitless

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INTRODUCTION:

SCRIPTURE: Ephesians 3:14-21

EXPOSITION:

1. _____ (3:14-15)

2. _____ (3:16-19)

a. House the _____ (3:16-17)

b. Know the _____ (3:18-19a)

c. Be filled with _____ (3:19b)

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BOTTOM LINE:

APPLICATION:

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