



## ***Paul's Power Prayer - Eph 3:14-21***

Nov 10 - Darrel Schmidt

### **INTRO**

As we have already seen in earlier sermons, Paul is well aware of the powers of evil and the spiritual forces working against this early church. To encourage the believers he prays two prayers. This Sunday we looked at Paul's second prayer. In his first prayer, Paul prays for spiritual **knowledge** of God's power. In this second prayer, he prays for them to be strengthened in order **to experience** God's power. Specifically he prays for them to experience Christ living in them through the Holy Spirit, and for Christ's love to flow through them. The prayer can be divided into three sections. ***Open with prayer<sup>1</sup>, then read Eph 3:14-21 together as a group. Consider dividing it by paragraph. It's helpful to all use the same Bible translation. SLC preaches from the NLT.***

### **SERMON RECAP**

1. Intro
  - a. A personal illustration of powerlessness.
  - b. The power and influence of the pagan culture.
2. Approach (v.14-15)
  - a. Paul's posture and attitude in prayer.
  - b. The significance of a name.
  - c. Confidence in prayer (3:12).
3. Ask (v.16-19)
  - a. Christ living in us.
    - i. Greek word for power - *dunamis*
    - ii. Where Christ lives.

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<sup>1</sup> Some groups prefer to begin with a longer time of sharing and prayer. This is a good instinct and ensures that prayer time doesn't get shortened by time constraints.



- b. Christ's love flowing through us.
  - i. The experience of love
  - ii. The Four dimensions (v.18)
- 4. Adore (v.20-21)
  - a. God's working through Christ results in praise.
  - b. Prayer matters to God.

## BONUS DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

*If you're covering 2 sermons in 1 Life Group meeting, skip to the Core Discussion Questions to save time. Otherwise, start here.*

1. Invite people to share moments where they have felt powerless (maybe what they wrote down on Sunday morning). What did that feel like? Did it get resolved?
2. Compare this prayer with the prayer in chapter 1:15-23. How many similarities in wording or theme can you find (hint: at least 6)? Do you notice the focus in the first prayer on knowledge of God's power, and his second prayer to experience that power? How have you experienced that power? When has it been most evident? When have you not seen it?
3. Scripture is filled with "power" verses. Examine the following and discuss how those can serve as an encouragement to us in our faith journey. Acts 1:8; Eph. 1:20; 3:12; James 5:16; 2 Peter 1:3. Can you think of other verses?

## CORE DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. In Paul's day people usually stood to pray but it's not so much about posture. Rather it's an attitude of humility.
  - a. What can we learn about approaching God from the following passages? 1 Sam. 2:1-2; 2 Kings 19:15-16; 1 Chron. 29:10-13; 2 Chron. 20:6; Neh. 1:5-6; Dan. 9:3-5.
  - b. How are we encouraged to approach God (see 3:12 and 1 John 5:14)?
  - c. How would you typically describe your approach?
2. Paul prays for these believers to be strengthened with power (NIV).
  - a. Where does he say this will happen (compare with the wording in 3:17)?
  - b. Why do we need strengthening here (see Rom. 8:9-10; 2 Cor. 4:16; Gal. 2:20)?
  - c. How does this relate to the word home or dwell in verse 17 (see John 14:23; 1 Cor. 3:16; 2 Cor. 13:5; Eph. 2:22)?
  - d. Where do you feel powerless? Where do you need more power?



3. Verse 18 is Paul's attempt to describe God's greatness using four dimensions. What do these words suggest to you? Compare this verse with Job 11:7-9; Psalm 139:7-12; 103:12 and Rom. 8:37-38. What do we learn about God? How might this encourage us when we are feeling powerless?
4. Do you ever wonder if our prayers matter to God? What does Paul have to say about this in v.20-21? What is God able to do? What are we unable to do?

## ACT & PRAY

1. As a group, share areas of praise and need (be honest with your own struggles regarding prayer). Write them down so you can be praying for them during the week.
2. Remind yourselves of your Adopt-a-Missionary, and any prayer requests you've seen from them.
3. Darrel gave an adaptation of Paul's prayer. Feel free to incorporate it into your prayer time, focusing on the concept of power in prayer. At the very least, have someone close your prayer time by praying verses 20-21 for the group.
4. Spend time praying, either all together, or in smaller groups. Feel free to experiment with silent prayer, written prayer, etc.
5. Our 40 Days of Prayer wrapped up this week. Share how that experience went for you. Don't stop praying for healing for Donna, Vonnie, Cameron, and Colin.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. Don't forget to get your tickets to Christmas Tales, our dinner theatre event on Nov 30. See the Welcome Centre on Sunday! This is a newcomer-focused event, so please bring friends. It will be fun, and the food will be great, and there will be no pressure or awkwardness.
2. Our Christmas Eve service will be Dec 24 at 5pm. Mark your calendars. This is a very visitor-friendly service, so please invite friends.

