

A Practical Study of EPHESIANS

HEAVEN'S PLAN for Life on Earth

“What It’s Like Living According to God’s Plan”

Key verse 5:17 — *“On this account, do not be foolish but be understanding what the will of the Lord is.”*

Study Number Six – His Plan for Power – Ephesians 3:14-21

There’s a book called *Beyond Combat* that was written during the Vietnam War by a young man who was actually the chaplain of a Green Beret group. And the book tells about being a chaplain involved in the war itself.

And in it he talks about the whole matter of prayer. If someone asked us, “Are you satisfied with your prayer life?” nobody would say yes.

It’s just one of those spotty things. It’s one of those areas that we kind of take it or leave it.

Prayer to us a lot of times becomes pushing the panic button when the red lights on the dashboard goes on. To a lot of people, that’s the way it is.

Or it’s Psalm 50:15:

Psalm 50:15

Call upon me in the day of trouble,
and I will deliver thee,
and thou shalt glorify me.

This is what James Hutchens says:

(Beyond Combat by James M. Hutchens)

I discovered prayer in route to the terror of war. Each day I began to spend an hour or so reading my Bible and praying. At first it was tough sledding. I ran out of words and prayer requests. The longer I prayed the more rewarding it became. Scrambling out of bed at 5:30 in the stillness of the ocean downy, I studied and prayed until 7:00 or 7:30. The experience made my appetite keen for listening and talking before God. A sense of Christ's presence was magnified after each appointment. I seemed to stand on the threshold of heaven, gazing in wonder at the riches of the grace of our Savior. A kind of closeness with him that I sought does not come all at once, but cultivating a habit a prayer is a good beginning. The quest was like waging war, winning a battle here and a skirmish there, and a series of ambushes and then a victory. The advanced ground must be guarded tenaciously. For some the war is brief, others find it painfully long.

Apparently the apostle Paul experienced the same struggle for he wrote "It is not to be thought that I have already achieved all this. I have not yet reached perfection but

I press on, hoping to take hold of that for which Christ once took hold of me.”

(source unknown)

We’ve called this particular study:

His Plan For Power.

The KEY VERSE is verse 16.

Ephesians 3:16

that He would grant to you, according to the riches of His glory, to be mightily strengthened through His Spirit in the inner man;

What we’re going to get to do is to go inside the Throne Room with the apostle Paul in one of his recorded, most magnificent prayers.

This is probably the HIGH POINT in Paul’s life.

A. T. Robertson, when he is writing on this particular passage, says this:

Nowhere does Paul sound such depths of spiritual emotion or rise to such heights of spiritual passion as here. The whole [thing] seems to be coloured with “the riches of His glory.”

p. 532 (source unknown)

Back in chapter one, after he got through giving us the Master Plan he started praying.

And he prayed for them that they would have an enlarged capacity, to have wisdom, to know the Lord better, that they would be those who would understand the hope of His calling.

Now he turns, after giving this incredible exposition on the body of Christ—the mystery—and he has to pray again.

It's like the Lord has given him some new insight and so now he's overwhelmed by it. And he wants to express in prayer his concerns for the Ephesian saints.

In verse 1 it looked like he was going to start to pray and he got interrupted and he gave all of this truth that we had on the body. Now he comes to PRAYER. So we're examining it and it's beautiful.

Let's get into it. How rich it is!

v. 14 For this reason I am bowing my knees before the Father,

“For this reason I am bowing my knees before the Father,”

For what “reason”? The plan of the body of Christ.

“For this reason” that we are interrelated with one another.

The wisdom of God is amazing.

“I bow my knee before the Father.”

v. 15 from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named,

“from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named,”

They’re all one in Jesus Christ, brought together into this one body—the SUPREME UNITY.

Now what are his prayer requests?

v. 16 that He would grant to you, according to the riches of His glory, to be mightily strengthened through His Spirit in the inner man;

“that He would grant to you, according to the riches of His glory, to be mightily strengthened through His Spirit in the inner man;”

We’ve called this HIS PLAN FOR POWER.

What do we mean by that?

Paul’s first concern for these Ephesian saints is that they’ll have enough strength to endure.

They’ll have enough power to rise above the yearnings of the

old nature to do and to accomplish the disciplines of Godliness.

The reason we don't pray enough, the reason we don't share our faith enough, the reason we don't read the Word enough, is because we've got botched up priorities. And as soon as we start spending time with the Lord, He not only reveals that but He also energizes us so that we are capable of doing those things that bring glory and honor to His name.

Now he starts right out with this whole matter of power.

Isaiah 40:31

They that wait upon the Lord...

How do we wait on the Lord?

PRAYER.

What's going to happen when we wait on the Lord?

We're going to RENEW our strength. We're going to mount up with wings as eagles. We're going to run and not be weary. And we're going to walk and not faint. (ref. Isaiah 40:31)

God is waiting to give us victory in those areas where there is weakness, where there is defeat, to allow us to rise above those to victory. And the power and the strength is there if we'd simply allow Him to provide that for us.

His first PETITION, and there are THREE of them here in this prayer, is that they would be:

1. “mightily strengthened”

HOW?—“through His Spirit.”

When we are filled with the Spirit—as we’re going to get to it in Ephesians chapter 5—we will have the strength, the ability placed within us to accomplish these things.

It is through the Holy Spirit. He is the source of power within the believer to provide that source of strength.

Now there are a lot of verses on that too. The very last words that Jesus ever spoke in Acts chapter 1 He said “You shall”—WHAT?—“receive power”—WHEN?—“after that the Holy Spirit is come upon you. Then you will be My witnesses.”

But the power resides in the person of the Holy Spirit.

Here’s another one:

2 Timothy 1:7

God hasn’t given us the spirit of fear [but WHAT?] of power.

He’s not a Spirit of timidity. He is a Spirit of power.

Philippians 4:13

I am ready for anything through the strength of the one who indwells me.

So he prays that they would be “mightily strengthened” through the presence of the Holy Spirit in their lives. But then he uses a very strange phrase that we have a tough time relating to.

What does it mean to be “strengthened...in the inner man”?

Now that is where we’re hurting. That’s where we have to find the answer.

J. B. Phillips wrote one of the greatest paraphrases of the New Testament but he’s basically liberal in theology.

You’d have a tough time pinning William Barclay down to the fact that he believed in the deity and the virgin birth of Christ. But he has written one of the most phenomenal daily study. We have to read him with wisdom. And if he’s dealing with word pictures in the New Testament and dealing with Greek text, he’s an authority. There’s nobody that’s going to come close to him. And when he speaks on this whole subject of the “inner man” this is what he says:

By *the inner man* the Greeks understood three things. (a) There was a man’s *reason*. It is Paul’s prayer that Jesus Christ should strengthen the reason of his friends. He wanted

them to be better able to discern between that which was right and that which was wrong. He wanted them to be less at the mercy of their passions and their instincts and their desires. He wanted Christ to give them the wisdom which would keep life purer and safe. (b) There was the *conscience*. It was Paul's prayer that the conscience of his people should ever become more and more sensitive. It is possible to disregard conscience so long and often that in the end conscience becomes dulled and insensitive. It was the prayer of Paul that Jesus should keep our consciences tender and on the alert. (c) There was the *will*. It is the essential weakness of life that so often we know what is right, and we mean to do it, but our will is not strong enough to back our knowledge and to carry out our intentions.

pp. 153-4 (source unknown)

Isn't that incredible?

There are THREE D's on that:

1. the D of DISCERNMENT.

How easy it is to go to somebody and say "is it right or is it wrong to do this or to do that?"

We don't have a right as a brother and sister in Christ to take a stand on things like that.

Romans 14:5

Let every man be persuaded in his own mind about these things.

Invariably somebody will come to us and they'll say, "Is it alright to drink, to dance, to smoke, or go with the girls that do?" It's hitting all these external things where there's grey in the scripture.

And as soon as we throw up our hands in holy horror we have lost that person's friendship. Because they're contemplating a real issue in their lives as to whether they should or they shouldn't do it. And by the fact that we took a bold stand on that issue, we just lost them as our friend. Especially if they're going to continue and they're having a problem with it.

That's why the scripture said that's personal between us and our Lord. That's the same way with giving. We put Christians on guilt trips all the time about giving their money. And yet the Bible says "every man, according as he purposes in his heart, so let him give." (2 Cor. 9:7)

We're not supposed to sign those pledge cards and make all those public commitments and be under pressure and put on guilt trips. "And we're going to go under if you don't give money!"

That's between us and the Lord. God's prospered us in a certain way financially and we and the Lord know that and how we decide that's our business. Nobody else has a right to tell us that we have to give 10% or that we have to do this or

do that to all of a sudden be spiritual.

What God intended was that the Spirit of God would strengthen us “in the inner man” so we would do what the Lord wants YOU/US to do and honor Him.

“every man according as he purposes in his heart, so let him.”
(2 Cor. 9:7)

Then we have to ask those big questions about those things.

Does it edify? Does it glorify God? Can we do this and build up the body of Christ?

But those are questions between us.

Does it cause doubt? If it does, we better think about it.

Does it enslave us? That’s another principle.

All of those are scriptural principles but we have to decide that as a believer.

We want our own children to learn to make decisions that are mature.

The easy thing is to make it or them. How many times when our kid comes up and says something do you say “No.” Oh that’s easy! We just say “No!”

Or do we say “Have you ever thought that through on your own?”

What are the pluses and the minuses on that?

Have we ever really thought that through?

If we make all their decisions until they get out of high school, we can plan on hitting the skids when they get to college. Because they’re going to let the environment around them make those decisions and there isn’t going to be nearly the kind of environment that we want them in no matter how hard we try.

And what the Lord wants from us is that we’re “strengthened...in the inner man” to make decisions that glorify God about the way we conduct ourselves in all these areas.

But we have a lot of people running around that want to do it for us.

And Paul says “I’m praying for you Ephesian saints. I can’t be there with you. And we’re praying for discernment between what is good, better and best. And we make those choices.”

That’s DISCERNMENT.

Now the second has to do with:

2. DESIRES.

Here's the CONSCIENCE.

What happens to a person who's living in sin? His conscience becomes calloused. His conscience becomes dulled. It becomes cold.

We talk to him about something that is definitely declared in the Word of God contrary to the way they're living and they're like so blasé.

It's like "Oh I know. The Lord's going to judge me for that but so what, big deal."

The conscience has gotten hard.

He says, "I want you strengthened in the inner man so that you're sensitive". So when the Spirit of God is speaking about something specific in our life, we are sensitive to that and we're letting the Spirit of God carry on His function and we're responding in accordance with that.

Just because everybody else does it, doesn't mean that it's right for us to do it.

So many times in the Scripture we read that little statement "So did not I."

Yes—right.

“Daniel purposed in his heart...” (Dan. 1:8)

It is a sensitivity with conscience to that which is right and to that which is wrong in the area of desire.

And then the third has to do with:

3. DISCIPLINED DETERMINATION.

It's the WILL.

The will that “if God said it, I'm going to do it.”

It's Paul saying “I treat my body roughly and I make it serve me.” (1 Cor. 9:27)

Disciplined Determination—it's the ability to push ourself away from the table. It's our ability to take care of this temple which God has given. It's our ability with disciplined determination to do those things which are glorifying to God.

So he's praying for STRENGTH “in the inner man.”

Now that kind of gets down to where we live, doesn't it?

And the very first thing that he wants is for them to have the power of the Spirit residing within them in power and freedom to help them to be strengthened in these specific areas.

v. 17 that Christ might settle down in your hearts through faith in love, having been rooted and grounded,

“that Christ might settle down in your hearts through faith in love, having been rooted and grounded,”

Now what’s the second one?

Not only that they would be “strengthened...in the inner man” but the next thing builds right on that.

2. “that Christ could settle down in their hearts.”

Does Christ feel at home in our heart?

How welcome does He feel at our house today?

At the church of Laodicea He was standing on the outside, knocking on the door even though they were Christians, wanting to get in.

It was John Hunter who wrote a book and he says we treat people in four different ways basically. He says when a total stranger comes and knocks on our door we leave them at the door and we go do for them what they have requested. But then, perhaps someone comes who lives down the street that we really haven’t gotten to know too well but they’re down there and they’re knocking on our door, we let them at least come inside the door to stand there while we go get what they

need.

Then there is our friend who knocks on the door that we met at the women's meeting or at the men's club or something and we're getting acquainted, we might invite him to come into the den and sit down and we'll have a conversation to get acquainted with each other. But then one of the kids rings the doorbell and comes blowing into the house and they can go into every room of the house because it's their place, it's their palace, they've got a run on the house.

(Living the Christ-Filled Life by John Hunter, pp. 69-70 paraphrased: <http://www.ccel.us/Hunter.chap9.html>)

What this tells us is, we can be in a progression in our relationship to Jesus Christ that we have so much stuff going on in our life that you know that He doesn't like and we haven't dealt with. That He's going to stand outside the screen door while we run and do what He wants us to do. And then we're going to get back to doing what we want to do.

Or maybe He's a friend from down the street that we meet on Sunday, just once in a while when we get on a guilt trip when we're listening to a sermon, and so we let Him inside the door and we go and do what He wants us to do.

What Paul's praying is that these folks will get to the place that they're so strengthened in the inner man, the house has been cleaned up and they don't mind at all having Christ have the run of the place because they're fulfilled and joyful over

the fact that HE owns that place. And that belongs to Him, that He could settle down, He could unpack His luggage. He's going to hang around for a while and He feels very comfortable there because He's finding a heart that is open and receptive that He can teach and that He can minister to.

Not only to be mightily strengthened in his inner man, but that “through faith” Christ could “settle down” in their hearts

“having been”—WHAT?—“rooted and grounded [in love],”

The more those roots go down into Jesus Christ, the greater the love.

The foundation is formed. We're “ROOTED”, we're “GROUNDED” in love.

Saving faith produces love.

Colossians 2:7

Let your roots grow down into him and draw up nourishment from him. See that you go on growing in the Lord, and become strong and vigorous in the truth that you were taught. Let your lives overflow with joy and thanksgiving for all that he has done.

“that Christ might settle down in your hearts through faith in love, having been rooted and grounded,”

Now why does he pray for those two things first of all?

He prays that they be “strengthened...in the inner man,” and “that Christ could settle down in your hearts.” But he also prays and he gives the PURPOSE for that in verse 18.

v. 18 in order that you may have power to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth;

“in order that you may have power to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and the length and the height and the depth;”

“and to know the love of Christ, which is surpassing knowledge,”

There’s probably been more written on that one verse than almost anything else.

What does he mean when he talks about “the length and the depth and the breadth and the height,” and all of that, of the love of God in the 18th verse?

It was Dr. Pentecost who said:

He’s still got the picture of a building in his mind and he’s thinking of all four corners of the building.
(source unknown)

That's possible that he still has that very thought. That we would "have power to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth" of it, what is the "length" of it, what's the "height" of it, what's the "depth" of the love of God in Jesus Christ.

Lovett is another writer who says:

His aroused imagination pictures Christ's love in mathematical terms. Rather than just saying "greatness," he thinks to bring the scope of it to their minds by expressing measurements. The context unlocks the meanings: one dimension looks back over the eons to when He first loved us, another to the endless future, still another to the depths He reached to rescue us, with the last pointing to the heights to which His love has raised us—full partners in His Glory!
p. 106 (source unknown)

Clear to the PAST, clear to the FUTURE, clear to the DEPTHS to take us out of the pit of sin to raise us to the heights of the glory of God in what we have to look forward to.

v. 19 and to know the love of Christ, which is surpassing knowledge, in order that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

"and to know the love of Christ, which is surpassing knowledge, in order that you may be filled with all the fullness of God."

There are only certain things that come through times of prayer and meditation and the apostle is saying “the love of Christ” is that way.

Remember what he prayed in that first prayer?

“Enlarged capacity to know”—we could almost take that request and put it right here.

He’s praying for an enlarged capacity for us to understand “the love of Christ.”

In our relationship with the Lord we go through many transitions in life.

As we began to grow in our Christian life, we’d go up a hill and we would say “I know WE can make it. I know we can make it. I know we can make it.”

But then as we got a little bit older and the hills got a little bit tougher, when we came to them we changed it once more and said “Only You can make it.”

That is a progression of experience with the Lord.

If someone were to ask us in our marriage relationship are we more deeply in love with our mate today than we were 25 years ago or 15 years ago, or how many years we’ve been married. We have to say “Yes” if we have a healthy relationship because we realize that person has cared for us,

has nourished our love, and has provided for us in so many ways. And the love is greater.

That's exactly the way it is with Jesus Christ. Satan would want us to believe that He does not know how to make a person happy. That He's waiting with a big stick, just waiting to rap our knuckles every time we get out of line. And he loves this.

Paul's prayer is that this love "surpasses knowledge." He says "I want you to know that because the more you know it the more you're going to be **FILLED WITH ALL THE FULLNESS OF GOD!**"

We're going to cooperate with God's plan for working in our life, the more we turn it over to Him and we allow Him to have full control in our life.

His prayer now is that this will be realized and that they will "be filled with all the fullness of God."

We've written that on a lot of things haven't we? But we never saw it in this context.

v. 20 Now to the One who is able to do infinitely more than we are asking for ourselves, or imagining, according to the power which is working in us,

"Now to the One who is able to do infinitely more than we are asking for ourselves, or imagining, according to the power

which is working in us,”

There he comes back to the word “power.”

We are calling upon a God who is able to do great and mighty things which we don't know anything about. (Jeremiah 33:3)

Jeremiah 32:27

“Behold I am the Lord God of all flesh. Is anything too hard for me?”

And the answer's “NO!”

“Now unto Him” from a POSITIVE point of view, “who is able to do infinitely more than we are asking for ourselves.”

We can really tell the Lord has a hand in it is always a little bit more. He always does a little bit extra just to show us that He loves us and He wanted to go beyond the need so that we just recognize that He had a hand in it and He delights to do that.

One of the most precious stories along this very line, and it perfectly illustrates this verse, is in Howard Hendricks little book on the life of Elijah.

Elijah was a famous man of prayer. He prayed for 3 1/2 years that it wouldn't rain and it didn't. And then after he went and confronted Ahab and Jezebel with this, he prayed that it

would rain and the servant went up and down the hill 7 times and on the 7th time he saw a cloud the size of a man's hand. And before they get back to Jezreel, they got caught in a goose-grounder. They were just soaking wet when the rains came.

He's characterized by prayer.

But this story is the story that he records in his text of a family in the Dallas area who had decided that the Lord had called them into Christian work. They had several children—actually 4 boys.

And their youngest son's name was Timmy. And things were tough. They really did not have enough money for food and clothes and housing and cars and all those things because they were just starting out.

So Timmy one day said to his mother, "Mother, do you think that God would really care if I asked Him for a shirt?" And mother said no.

And so that night at family devotions after daddy got through reading the scripture, she entered into their little family prayer log "shirt for Timmy, size 7."

Timmy, every night, would remind them to pray for a shirt.

Well in the midst of the summer a Dallas clothier was making a close-out and he called them one day and said "Knowing

that you're raising young boys, I have got an excess of some shirts that I thought you might be able to use."

She said, "Well, what size are they?"

He said "Size seven."

"Well how many you got?"

"Well I've got a dozen. You can have them all."

That night at the table as though it was perfectly cued, Timmy said "Remember the shirt!" Now the normal family would have said "Awe forget it man. We've got that taken care of."

But as prearranged Tommy, his older brother, went out and came in. "Timmy we don't have to pray anymore. God answered today. Here's your shirt." He put it down in front of him.

His eyes bugged out with gratitude! Tommy runs out and he comes in with another one. And another one and another one and another one and another one and there's a dozen of them piled up on the table and Timmy thinks that God has gone into the shirt business!

That's exceeding abundant isn't it?

(Elijah: Confrontation, Conflict & Crisis by Howard G.

Hendricks, pp. 46-47 paraphrased.

http://bible.org/seriespage/prayers-elijah-1-kings-1830-46#P1197_307729

We found in these 13 or 14 years of living by faith without ever taking an offering or initiating letting our needs be known, and God when He has a hand in it, always does more than you anticipate.

He always does exceeding abundant. He delights to surprise His children with what He is able to do when we come and lay before Him our prayers.

Here's a great little prayer:

Dear Lord,

Too often in my life I've messed around in my tiny dirt plods when through Your glorious power I could have moved mountains. Please change me Lord.

(source unknown)

We have to confess that too often times we turn to the Lord and we limit Him so much with our unbelief.

Paul is ending his prayer by saying "I'm talking to someone who does exceeding abundant above all we can ask or think."

One mother described this with her little child, trying to get him to pray:

“Now I lay me—”
Say it darling,
“Lay me” lisped the tiny lips
... kneeling, bending,
O’er [his] folded fingertips,
“Down to sleep—” “to sleep,” [he] murmur’d,
And the curly head drop’d low;
“I pray the Lord—” I gently added,
You can say it all I know.
“Pray the Lord” the words came faintly
Fainter still “my soul to keep;”
Then the tired head fairly nodded,
And the child was fast asleep.
But the dewy eyes half opened,
When I clasped [him] to my breast,
And the dear voice softly whispered
“Mama, God knows all the rest, ...

CHORUS

Oh the trusting,
Sweet confiding,
Of the child heart!
Would that I
Thus might trust my Heavenly Father,
He Who hears my feeblest cry.

“The Unfinished Prayer” (1872) (Words by Thomas H. Ayers) (<http://pdmusic.org/webster/jpw72tup.txt>)

**v. 21 to Him be the glory in the church and in Christ
Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen.**

“to Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen.”

Wow! What a doxology we get at the end of the prayer.

Another writer helps us realize how much we can help one another as we're faithful to remember them in prayer.

This writer said:

Through your prayer is soul in conflict,
Triumph in the strife obtained;
Fiery darts and fierce temptations,
Where by God's great might restrained.
Through your prayer sin's chains were broken,
Blinded eyes received their sight;
Souls afar in darkness groping,
Found the path of heavenly light.
Through your prayer the foe was vanquished,
Doors were opened and ways were made;
Through your prayer the force and fury
Of the raging storm was stayed
Through your prayer the weak were strengthened,
For the burden of the day,
And the weary feet encouraged
In the path where duty lay.
Through your prayer new hope was given,

To a soul sore tempest tossed;
Think not then your work was fruitless;
Deem not that the time was lost.
Not a service God can give us,
Will a richer harvest bear.
Than this one of intercession,
This blest ministry of prayer.
—Ruth Thomas
(source unknown)

What did he pray for? He prayed that they would be “strengthened...in the inner man.” That they would have power to comprehend and know the love of Christ, and that they would be filled with all the fullness of God. That summarizes that prayer.

Here are the lessons that come from our study.

Lesson #1: Because of his concern over their spiritual and emotional well-being, because of his problems, we see him in this passage bowing his knees before the Father (verse 14).

Lesson #2: The key verse in this study is verse 16: “that He would grant to you, according to the riches of His glory, to be mightily strengthened through His Spirit in the inner man.”

Lesson #3: There is no energy shortage with the Father.

Lesson #4: Philippians 4:13: “I can do all things through Him who strengthens me” (NASB).

Lesson #5: Isaiah 40:31: “But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength. They shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint” (TLB).

Lesson #6: “Strengthened . . . in the inner man” (verse 16) involves our discernment, our desires and our disciplined determination.

Lesson #7: Are we making progress toward being rooted and grounded in the Lord Jesus Christ?

Lesson #8: Can you pray with the Apostle Paul “that you may be filled with all the fullness of God” (verse 19)?

Lesson #9: What a joy to come to “the One who is able to do infinitely more than we are asking for ourselves, or imagining according to the power which is working in us” (verse 20).

Lesson #10: Have you prayed for strength through His Spirit in the inner man?

Lesson #11: Have you asked for power to comprehend and know the love of Christ?

Lesson #12: Have you prayed to be filled with all the fullness of God?

Lesson #13: Are you satisfied with your prayer life?

John 16:24

Hitherto have you asked nothing in My name; ask and you shall receive, that your joy may be full.

What a thrill to know that we can talk to our Father and see Him begin to answer.

Do we have enough discipline to start right while we're here to make a list of specific things we're going to pray about and put down the date for the request and then put another column over here for the answer when we get it?

Try it. Just put people, just put needs, put personal matters on there about our own walk with God and talk with our Father about those things.

If we don't do it now, we'll forget about it. So decide to spend real fruitful quality times alone with our Lord in experiencing the power of prayer.

Father, we come to You and call You Father because of what Jesus has done for us on the cross. And because of that, we are Your children, born into Your family. Lord we claim that promise in Philippians 4:19 that You will supply all of our needs according to Your riches in glory in Christ Jesus. We just pray that as we recognize that the power resides in the Person of the Holy Spirit, that our lives would be open, submissive, pliable and receptive, sensitive to divine truth.

That the Spirit of God can take over to provide the power and that we too would really learn how to verbalize our needs and requests to You and see You answer like we just read—exceeding abundant above all that we could ask or think. In Jesus’ name we pray. Amen.

Copyright © 2023 by Bible Teaching Resources by Don Anderson Ministries. The author's teacher notes incorporate quoted, paraphrased and summarized material from a variety of sources, all of which have been appropriately credited to the best of our ability. Quotations particularly reside within the realm of fair use. It is the nature of teacher notes to contain references that may prove difficult to accurately attribute. Any use of material without proper citation is unintentional. Teacher notes have been compiled by Ronnie Marroquin.

A Practical Study of EPHESIANS

HEAVEN'S PLAN for Life on Earth

“What It’s Like Living According to God’s Plan”

Key verse 5:17 — *“On this account, do not be foolish but be understanding what the will of the Lord is.”*

STUDY NUMBER SIX – HIS PLAN FOR POWER – EPHESIANS 3:14-21

KEY VERSE 3:16

v. 14 For this reason I am bowing my knees before the Father,
v. 15 from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named,
v. 16 that He would grant to you, according to the riches of His glory, to be mightily strengthened through His Spirit in the inner man;
v. 17 that Christ might settle down in your hearts through faith in love, having been rooted and grounded,
v. 18 in order that you may have power to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth;
v. 19 and to know the love of Christ, which is surpassing knowledge, in order that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.
v. 20 Now to the One who is able to do infinitely more than we are asking for ourselves, or imagining, according to the power which is working in us,
v. 21 to Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen.

NOTES

QUESTIONS:

1. Read Ephesians 3:14-21 and in your own words pull out the main thought of this passage.

2. What is Paul doing in this section, according to verse 14?

3. What is Paul praying for in verse 16?

4. What is Paul praying for in verse 17?

5. What does he pray that they might know, according to verse 19?

6. What is his desire for them in verse 19?

7. How much can God do in answer to our prayers, according to verse 20?

8. What is working in us, according to verse 20?

9. What verse in the study has meant the most to you?

10. What lesson have you learned from this study?

LESSONS FROM THE PASSAGE:

What are some of the lessons we can learn from this particular study?

LESSON #1: Because of his concern over their spiritual and emotional well-being, because of his problems, we see him in this passage bowing his knees before the Father (verse 14).

LESSON #2: The key verse in this study is verse 16: “that He would grant to you, according to the riches of His glory, to be mightily strengthened through His Spirit in the inner man.”

LESSON #3: There is no energy shortage with the Father.

LESSON #4: Philippians 4:13: “I can do all things through Him who strengthens me” (NASB).

LESSON #5: Isaiah 40:31: “But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength. They shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint” (TLB).

LESSON #6: “Strengthened . . . in the inner man” (verse 16) involves our discernment, our desires and our disciplined determination.

LESSON #7: Are we making progress toward being rooted and grounded in the Lord Jesus Christ?

LESSON #8: Can you pray with the Apostle Paul “that you may be filled with all the fullness of God” (verse 19)?

LESSON #9: What a joy to come to “the One who is able to do infinitely more than we are asking for ourselves, or imagining, according to the power which is working in us” (verse 20).

LESSON #10: Have you prayed for strength through His Spirit in the inner man?

LESSON #11: Have you asked for power to comprehend and know the love of Christ?

LESSON #12: Have you prayed to be filled with all the fullness of God?

LESSON #13: Are you satisfied with your prayer life?