

IMMEASURABLY MORE ..

learning from the letter to the Ephesians

“Now to Him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to Him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! [Eph.3.20f]

The letter to the Ephesians sets out for us ‘the unsearchable riches of Christ’ (Eph.3.8), and assures us that God is ‘able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine’ (Eph.3.20): this study is intended to help us all enter into and enjoy that ‘immeasurably more’.

You can find the background to this series [here](#).

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No pressure!

As always there are 7 [sets of] questions in this study: that’s mainly to provide the option, which some find useful, of the material being used as a daily study guide. Don’t feel any pressure to answer *every* question in your Community Group – almost certainly there won’t be the time for that!

Priorities!

You’ll know your own group, so use what you’ll find most helpful. Again there’s some benefit in looking at all the questions this week, but the really key questions for us all as a fellowship are probably 4, 6 & 7: try to cover all the questions, but ensure you cover at least these!

Prayer!

Do try also to make a point in your Community Group of leaving time for praying together!

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4. Eph.1.3-10 [w/b Sunday 29th January]

“..He chose you in Him ..”

Paul certainly hit the ground running in this letter! Verses 3-14 of chapter 1 are all one long, extended sentence in the original: it's the outpouring of a heart filled with wonder and praise at the boundless grace of God in Jesus Christ. So although our focus will be on vv.3-10 in this study, it's worth reading on to v.14 to catch the full flow of Paul's thought.

The theme of this study has to do with the 'roots' which we have in Christ. Roots are as important for us as people as they are for plants in the garden: and in these opening verses of the letter Paul explores with his readers those roots.

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1. Read Ephesians 1.3-10. The passage is all about our 'roots' as believers in Christ. In a society increasingly, and alarmingly, 'rootless', it's worth reflecting on the importance of our 'roots'.

How far back can you trace your own 'family roots'?

What have you learned to value and been grateful for in those 'roots'? Or do you feel that your background has impeded your growth as a person?

2. Read Ephesians 1.3. Paul's starts by insisting that God has blessed us with 'every spiritual blessing': that bold statement is qualified in a number of ways.

What are 'the heavenly realms' to which he refers?

What do you think is encompassed in his reference to every *spiritual* (as opposed to *material*) blessing?

The phrase 'in Christ' (or its equivalent) will recur throughout these verses: what does it mean to be 'in Christ' and why is that so important?

3. Read Ephesians 1.4-5. It's not entirely clear whether the phrase 'in love' belongs properly with v.4 or v.5 (remember it's all part of one long sentence): in reality it belongs with both!

Why do you think Paul is so careful to trace God's loving choice of His people back to 'before the creation of the world'?

What difference does it make to you knowing that you were chosen in Him before the creation of the world?

4. Read Ephesians 1.4-7. Paul alludes in these verses to the two-fold end God had in view in His setting His love upon us.

That end was, first, that we should be 'holy and blameless in His sight'.

How does the reference in v.7 to 'redemption through His blood' explain our being 'holy'?

And, similarly, how does the reference in v.7 to 'the forgiveness of sins' explain our being 'blameless in His sight'?

Why do you think Paul adds the words 'in His sight' at the end of the phrase 'holy and blameless'?

5. Read Ephesians 1.4-7. The other (related) way of seeing the end God had in view when setting His love upon us is to grasp His intent to have us 'adopted as His sons'.

Read **1 John 3.1-2**. What delights your heart about the knowledge that you are a child of God?

If you've the time (and an internet facility!) try listening to the Bethel Music song, '*No longer a slave to fear*'

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f8TkUMJtK5k>

To what in the song do you most closely relate?

6. Read Ephesians 1.5-10. God's setting His love on us in Jesus is not a 'random act of kindness', but is rather 'in accordance with His pleasure and will'.

What is the will and purpose of God as described by Paul in vv.9-10?

What excites you about that purpose of God?

In what ways does an understanding of God's eternal purpose encourage you in your walk with Him?

7. Read Ephesians 1.3-10. The passage begins significantly with the words '*Praise be to the God and Father ..*'. God's glory, rather than our gladness, is what lies behind His gift to us of Christ.

How does His choosing us in love in Christ result in "*the praise of His glorious grace*"?

Against the backdrop of these verses, why do you think we can often find ourselves so slow to praise the Lord?

When we gather together for worship, how might such *praise* of God be better kindled in our hearts?