

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. It’s more difficult this week to identify which are ‘the *key* questions’, as that may vary between the groups.

Priorities!

You’ll know your own group, so use what you’ll find most helpful. It’s another short passage, which again makes it difficult to prioritise some questions above others! Perhaps the most helpful questions will be 3, 4 and 6!

Prayer!

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

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9. Eph.1.18-19 [w/b Sunday 5th March]

“that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened”

Paul’s prayer here (vv.15-23) in some ways ‘mirrors’ his great opening statement (vv.3-14) where he set out, in the most expansive manner, the Lord’s blessing upon the lives of His people. In that opening passage he reminded them of their deep ‘roots’ – we are people upon whom God has chosen from all eternity to set His love, and the implications of that, he argued, are huge!

Having expounded these great truths, with his pastor’s heart he then prays these truths home to their hearts, looking to the Lord to help them really grasp, see and ‘feel’ the force of these truths in a way which will impact their lives and transform their living.

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1. **Read Ephesians 1.3-23.** A pastor is always keen that his people ‘get’ the message, and here Paul, by praying as he does, underlines that the Holy Spirit is as vital in the ‘hearing’ as in the ‘preaching’.

What are the three specific truths in vv.18-19 which Paul prays that those to whom he’s writing may know?

To what three truths in the opening verses (vv.3-14) do they correspond?

2. Read Ephesians 1.18. Paul sought first for these believers a deepening *relationship* with God (vv.15-17): now he prays that they may have a deepening *understanding* of God and of His grace towards us in Christ.

Although it's no substitute for actually knowing a person, how can what we know *about* that individual help us know the person better?

Why do you think Paul refers to their *hearts* here ('the eyes of your heart..' v.18), rather than referring to their *minds*?

3. Read Ephesians 1.18. Paul alludes first to God's having called them (the NIV's "*the hope to which He has called you..*" is literally '*the hope of His calling*').

Read **Eph.1.3-10**: to what in particular have we been called, according to Paul's teaching in the opening verses of the chapter?

Read **Romans 4.6-25**, where it's said of Abraham that '*against all hope, Abraham in hope believed ..*': on what did Abraham base such a hope? And what lessons does that have for us?

4. **Read Ephesians 1.18.** It's not entirely clear whether '*His glorious inheritance*' refers to the inheritance which God *has in* His people (along the lines of Deuteronomy 32.8-9: "*For the LORD's portion is his people, Jacob his allotted inheritance*") or, more likely, that which He *gives to* His people.

Read Psalm 73, where Asaph contrasts 'the prosperity of the wicked' (v.3) with the riches of the believer (vv.23-26): what are the riches which we as believers will inherit?

Read Romans 8.16-23, where Paul speaks of us as being 'heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ': what, according to this passage in Romans, will our inheritance comprise?

5. **Read Ephesians 1.18.** Paul speaks of God's inheritance *in* (or '*among*') the saints – and in a similar way he will, in his next prayer (3.14-19), recognise that it will only ever be '*with all the saints*' that we're able to '*know this love which surpasses knowledge*'.

'Grace is but glory begun, and glory is but grace perfected' (Jonathan Edwards): in what ways, in and through the life of our fellowship, are we able to begin expressing and/or enjoying (even in some small part) the glory we will one day fully inherit?

6. **Read Ephesians 1.19.** We've seen before that the gift of God's Spirit to us is associated with 'power' (see Acts 1.8). Paul here prays that his readers may grasp the greatness of that power.

Read 2 Tim.1.7-14: in contrast to Timothy's perhaps natural timidity how does Paul suggest the 'power' he has been given should find expression?

In what ways do you relate to Timothy?

7. **Read Ephesians 1.19.** Although the Holy Spirit dwells *within* the believer, Paul speaks here of God's power *towards* believers.

What is God applying His power *towards* us to accomplish?