

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](#).

*

No pressure!

As always there are 7 [sets of] questions in this study: that’s to provide the option, which some find useful, of the material being used as a daily study guide.

Priorities!

You’ll know your own group, so use what you’ll find most helpful. These verses all relate to a single theme, and prioritizing some over others seems somewhat ‘random’! It will be good for us all to address question **1**, to ensure the study is not simply an ‘academic’ exercise: and questions **3** & **5**, similarly, are also questions which it would be beneficial for us all to study

Prayer!

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

*

10. Eph.1.19-23 [w/b Sunday 12th March]

“.. His incomparably great power ..”

Paul's concern in vv.18-23 is that believers should grasp, and be gripped by, the hope of God's calling, the riches of God's inheritance, and the greatness of God's power. The previous study (9) focused on the first two: this study will look at the third, to which Paul himself accords more space.

The power of God is a theme which runs through the whole of Scripture: indeed, in one brief summarizing passage (Ps.62.11f) the whole Bible is declared to be a message with two primary themes – the *power* of God and the *love* of God.

*

1. **Read Ephesians 1.18-23.** The gospel is elsewhere described by Paul as 'the power of God unto salvation' (Rom.1.16). These verses in Ephesians 1 (vv.19-23) see him praying that believers may grasp the greatness of that power.

What has been your own experience of the saving power of God? Take time to think back over God's dealings with you down the years and try to identify the ways in which God has applied His power to your life and living.

Why do you think Paul saw it as so important that we grasp the greatness of this power of God?

2. Read Eph.1.19. It is particularly the power of God *towards* us (rather than *in* us or *through* us) to which Paul is referring in this prayer.

What is God so intent on accomplishing in us that He directs His power towards us?

3. Read 1 Thessalonians 1.4-10. Paul narrates the way God worked at Thessalonica, and was very conscious of the power of God as he preached the message.

What was the effect of the power of God on the lives and living of these believers?

What changes are you able to recognise in your own life as a consequence of God's power towards you?

4. Read Eph.1.19-23. Paul is at pains to help his readers see just how incomparably great is the power of God towards those who believe.

What are the phrases Paul uses through these verses to build this sense of the greatness of God's power?

Why do you think he likens (or 'compares' the incomparable!) greatness of God's power to these actions of God in particular?

5. Read Rom.8.9-17. The power of God towards us is likened first (in Eph.1.20) to that power by which Jesus was raised from the dead: in this passage in Romans Paul speaks similarly about the powerful working of the Spirit in our lives.

What consequences (spiritually, morally, and experientially) does Paul envisage and stress here as the result of the Spirit's powerful work?

6. Read Philippians 2.1-16. In his prayer (Eph.1.18-23) Paul also compares the power of God towards us to the 'exaltation' of Jesus. Here in Philippians 2, he draws a similar comparison.

What is the connection between the exaltation of Jesus (vv.1-11) and Paul's exhortation in vv.12ff?

Read 1 John 3.1-3. Why should the hope that we shall be like Him result in our 'purifying' ourselves? Can you see ways in which this has worked out in your own life?

7. **Read Eph.1.22-23.** The resurrection and exaltation of Jesus, and His being appointed head over all things, are, according to Paul, very specifically, *'for the church'*.

What are the two ways in which the church is described here, and what do these descriptions convey?

Read Eph.1.9-10 again, where similar phrasing about the 'headship' of Christ is used by Paul: in what ways does God mean His church to be a present 'signpost' to the future fulfilment of His purpose?