

LIFE GROUP STUDY GUIDE

ID: Discovering Our True Identity in Christ “A Reason To Pray” Ephesians 3: 14-21

Ken Dryden, October 19, 2014

Sermon Summary

How we pray reveals a lot about what we believe about God, what we understand as our identity and what we think is important in life. Often our prayers can be focused on ourselves or we only pray when we are facing a crisis. In Ephesians 3 we have the opportunity to “listen in” on Paul as he prays for the church in Ephesus. There is much we can learn from this prayer (and the one in Ephesians 1) about why and how we can pray for the church. Sometimes Christians live in spiritual poverty because we fail to realize who God is and who we are (Ephesians 1) and don’t have the power to live out our identity and calling (Ephesians 3). The prayer in Ephesians 1 focuses on Revelation - “I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened” (1:18); whereas the prayer in Ephesians 3 is for the Power to live out this calling - “strengthened with power through His Spirit” (3:16). Paul prays for three things:

1. Inner Strength (3:16) 2. Christ’s Abiding Presence (3:17a) 3. Deep Roots in Christ’s Love (3:18).

As we pray these prayers do we believe that God can do MORE? (3:20) God says to us at Lakeside: “I can do more in this church than you have yet asked or thought.” The result of living out this prayer for Strength, Presence and Roots is that we will have Fullness in Christ and bring Glory to Him.

Key Verse: Ephesians 3:20-21

Bottom Line: “God can do MORE!”

Group Discussion Questions:

1. Ask God to speak to you through His Word. Then read Ephesians 3: 14-21 twice, pausing between readings. What words or phrases stand out to you? Why?
2. The NLT reads: “I pray that from his glorious, unlimited resources he will empower you with inner strength through his Spirit.” What area of your life would benefit from you asking for His inner strength?
3. Christ wants to dwell in your heart and be at home in your life. Consider the major things you are doing in your life each day: How can you more clearly do these things for His glory?
4. Paul prays that we would be rooted in Christ’s love, that we would grasp how wide and long and high and deep His love is for us, with an assurance that transcends our understanding. How do you shift this understanding of Christ’s love from head knowledge to heart assurance? (Also consider Paul’s rhetorical questions in Romans 8:31-39)
5. Considering that God is able to do “immeasurably more” (v.20), how do you feel this could change how you pray for yourself and your family? How could it change how you pray for LCC?
6. The doxology, or majestic description of God, considers His Power in verse 20 and His Glory in verse 21. How can someone’s life bring God glory? How do you contribute to the church bringing glory to God?

Application: Take time in your group today to pray these things for each other. Pray each day this week for each other and the church that we will have: 1. Inner Strength 2. Know Jesus’ Abiding Presence 3. Send our Roots deep into Christ’s love.

Make sure to leave time to pray for one another!