



# prayers in ephesians

2 studies in Ephesians  
for individuals, groups & 1:1



Ephesians is a most wonderful letter for the people of God—His church. It sets out for us what it means for people to become what we are *in Christ*. It identifies the objective reality for people who have received God's undeserved favour and who have been made alive *in Christ*; and then it tells us how we might become what we are. In the same way that we are made alive and raised *in Christ*, we have every spiritual blessing *in Him* that influences how we live. It has been said that Ephesians is one of the most significant documents ever written that even matches the book of Romans in its impact and influence on Christian thought and spirituality. It is a book that positions the local church at the centre of God's purposes for the world and reveals to us God's plans for redeeming His creation through it. It challenges our consumerist and individualistic views of what it means to be 'saved' and our relationship with the people of God to which we are called and of which we are a vital part. Ephesians reveals the hope of the world in the local church *in Christ*. Each of the studies is presented in three sections. **Open** questions are intended to start discussion and help people feel comfortable sharing in a group. The **Read** section accounts for most of the questions and should be the main focus of each session. With these questions, Bible Study Group Leaders should encourage people to *answer from the passage* rather than from knowledge of other parts of the Bible. The **Reflect** questions may be used for group discussion or private contemplation and reflection.

Ephesians is a short letter of only six chapters that takes around 30 mins to read. It's sometimes very easy to get caught up in the specific details of a piece of text without really seeing the thrust of the whole — so there's great value in reading the whole letter in one sitting in order to understand the big picture; as you do this you may want to ask yourself the question — '*How does the whole letter look back to the big point in Ephesians 1:10*'? We encourage you to read the whole of Ephesians out loud together as a group in your first Bible Study Group session as this will give a feel for the main ideas of what is being communicated (*this was also how the letter would have first been heard in the early Christian church*).

At Trinity Church Mount Barker our Bible Study Groups normally explore a study in the week leading up to the sermon. Our purpose in adopting this approach is to encourage the study of Scripture that is not influenced by having already heard the sermon, and allows groups and individuals to independently '*wrestle with the Bible*' in each of the studies.

These studies can also be used for private study or undertaken with a friend, but we encourage you to join a Bible Study Group to gain the benefit of group learning that promotes our growing toward maturity in Christ. If you are doing these studies individually, we encourage you to let someone know, and arrange a time to meet with them to tell them how God's Word is changing your life and to pray together.

In order to get the most out of these studies, you can do three things each week before your study time:

1. **Read the passage in advance** (it really helps your understanding to read it out aloud to yourself)
2. **Pray** that God would help you to understand it more fully and how it applies to you
3. **Think about the passage**, and if you have time, take a look at the questions in the Study Guide.

This will certainly help you, but an even better principle is to think about how you can serve each other. Your preparation and attendance will help your brothers and sisters in Christ as they come together each week, so please do make it a priority.

### **Recommended Reading**

- Clinton Arnold — Ephesians [*Exegetical Commentary of the NT*]
- Peter O'Brian — The Letter to the Ephesians [*Pillar NT Commentary*]
- Simon Austen — Teaching Ephesians [*Proclamation Trust Resources*]
- John Stott — The Message of Ephesians [*Bible Speaks Today*]
- Lee Gatiss — Ephesians Study Notes for Leaders [[St Helen's Bishopsgate Bible Study Resources](#)]
- [christianbiblestudies.com](#) — Ephesians—You are God's Masterpiece [*Study Through the Bible*]

## Study 1 — Praying for Power

Ephesians 1:15-23

### Open

1. In what ways do you struggle with prayer?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. What do you normally pray for Christian people you don't know?

### Read Ephesians 1:15-23

3. What does Paul pray for the Ephesians? Break down what he says into (at least 6) different prayer requests.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
4. Why do you think Paul tells them what he's praying for them (i.e. what's the point of Paul reporting the content of his quiet times)?



9. What does it mean that the same power that raised Jesus from the dead is available to you (v19–20)?

10. List all the things these verses tell you about Christ (v19b–23)?

11. What does it mean (for Jesus) to be the head of the church?

12. How is Jesus *'the fullness of Him who fills all in all'*?

**Reflect**

13. What does it mean to you that you are God's inheritance?





**Open**

1. Thinking about the content of your prayers, what do you normally pray about? How do you decide what to pray for?
2. What has most helped you grasp God's love for you?
3. Describe a powerful example of God's love in your life?
4. What can you do to better experience God's love in your everyday life? Brainstorm ideas.

**Read** Ephesians 3:14-21

5. What is the motivation for Paul's prayer (what is the reason in '*For this reason ...*')?



11. How would you explain v19 in comparison to Ephesians 1:23?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
12. How does v20 encourage us in light of what Paul has been praying in vv14-19?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
13. What is different about this prayer and the one in 1:15-23? What accounts for this different emphasis?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
14. How does God exactly '*do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine*'?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
15. How does God '*receive glory in the church and in Christ Jesus*'?

16. What words or themes in 3:20-21 are echoes from the rest of chapters 1-3? How does this benediction (blessing) tie together the main themes that have run through the first three chapters of Ephesians?

### **Reflect**

17. Three times in vv14-21 Paul mentions '*love*' and '*power*'. What do we learn about power and love in these verses?

18. What is your attitude toward church? How is it similar or different to Paul's?

19. What is Paul's main concern in this prayer? How will we see it being answered in our church if we pray this prayer?

20. How might your prayer life change as a result of studying this prayer?

21. What is the big idea of chapters 1-3?

22. Is there a pattern to Paul's writing; e.g. does he state his point, illustrate it, then apply it, or does he give a main point followed by 5 sub-points, or is there a different pattern to these chapters?

23. What have you learned by studying these (three) chapters and how has it made a difference in your life or the way you relate to God?





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