



Notes for Adult discussion groups  
at  
On-Line@9 Worship Service  
on Sunday 8 February 2009

## Building up the Church

### Ephesians 3 vv15 - 21

**14** For this reason I fall on my knees before the Father, **15** from whom every family in heaven and on earth receives its true name. **16** I ask God from the wealth of his glory to give you power through his Spirit to be strong in your inner selves, **17** and I pray that Christ will make his home in your hearts through faith. I pray that you may have your roots and foundation in love, **18** so that you, together with all God's people, may have the power to understand how broad and long, how high and deep, is Christ's love. **19** Yes, may you come to know his love – although it can never be fully known – and so be completely filled with the very nature of God.

**20** To him who by means of his power working in us is able to do so much more than we can ever ask for, or even think of: **21** to God be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus for all time, for ever and ever! Amen.

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### Notes and Questions

1. Why does Paul pray (1:15)? - because of his delight in all that God has done in Christ

(he starts with praise in 1:3) and because of the Ephesians faith and love.

2. Make a list of the things that Paul was praying for. Were these things that the Ephesians were lacking? If not, then why was Paul praying for them?

These prayers challenge our typical priorities in prayer for others. We often concentrate on people's day-to-day lives (health, family circumstances etc. etc.). While God is concerned with these, our key priorities should be elsewhere for our Christian brothers and sisters. So how should I pray for XXX?

Perhaps we should ask "What is his or her greatest need?" "What are God's goals for us?" Paul's answer would be that we may have the spirit of wisdom so that we know God - so that we know His blessings, His power and His love. Also he prays that Christ would live in our hearts and we would be filled with the fullness of God. God's chief concern in this life is not to make us happy or take away suffering (and we may despair if we think that that is His priority or if this becomes the mainstay of our prayer life). His chief concerns are that we know Him and how much He loves us and that we become more like Christ. What a difference it would make if we all prayed like that for one another!

3. How can verses 17 to 19 help encourage and strengthen us when we feel shut out or isolated? We can never be lost to God's love. See also Romans 8:38-9

4. What do verses 20 and 21 say about God's ability to answer prayer? Does this challenge the way in which you pray?

5. What treasure are you aware of that you could share with others?

**Read the passage through once or twice and see which words you are drawn to and meditate on those for a few minutes.**

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