



UPSTATE GROUP GUIDE

Fully Alive: Ephesians

April 27-May 3

Ephesians 3:14-21

Things to Know

See Other Sermons Here

[Click Here to Watch](#)

Gospel Connections and Conversations

[Click Here to report your Gospel Connections & Conversations](#)

Studying God's Word *In Community*

Reminder: The goal of group time is not to re-preach the sermon, but to understand and apply God's Word together.

Sermon Recap

Ephesians 3:14-21 shows us that spiritual growth happens from the inside out. Paul prays that we would be strengthened by the Spirit, rooted in Christ's love, and filled with the fullness of God. This is not about doing more, but about experiencing more of Him. Because God is able to do far more than we can ask or imagine, we can live with confidence, knowing His power is at work within us for His glory.

Read

Read Ephesians 3:14-21 and make observations about the text.

- What is God teaching us in the passage?
 - What does this reveal about who God is, what God has done, and how I should respond?
 - Which part of the text was most meaningful to you and why?
 - What do you need help understanding about this passage?
-

Scripture

Ephesians 3:14-21

Prayer for Spiritual Strength

[14] For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, [15] from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named, [16] that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being, [17] so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith—that you, being rooted and grounded in love, [18] may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, [19] and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

[20] Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, [21] to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen. (ESV)

[The Holy Bible, English Standard Version](#). ESV® Text Edition: 2016. Copyright © 2001 by Crossway Bibles, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Ephesians 3:14-21.

Living on Mission In Community

Living on mission as a group begins with being rooted in the love of Christ. Ephesians 3 reminds us that we cannot give away what we have not first experienced. As the Spirit strengthens us and Christ dwells in us, His love begins to overflow into the lives of others. As a group, this means we pursue depth with God together, pray for one another's spiritual growth, and step into opportunities to reflect Christ's love in tangible ways. Mission is not driven by pressure, but by

overflow. The more we are filled with God's presence, the more we naturally point others to Him through our words, actions, and relationships.

How is God leading me to respond to His Word this week?

Optional Breakout Questions

Consider making time at the end of the group to break out into groups of 2-4 (keep them gender specific). Have them answer these three questions about their weeks:

1. How did you feed yourself?
 - *(What have you been doing to feed your spiritual life, and how is it going?)*
2. How did you feed others?
 - *(How did you share the gospel or gospel truth with someone this week?)*
3. How did you feed your flesh?
 - *(What sins did you struggle with this week? How can your friends hold you accountable?)*

Leader Resources - April 27-May 3

Small Group Curriculum - Ephesians 3:14-21

1. Session Overview

In Ephesians 3:14–21, Paul shifts from teaching to prayer, showing us that spiritual truth is meant to lead to spiritual experience. After unpacking the gospel and the unity of the Church, Paul kneels before the Father and prays that believers would be strengthened from the inside out. His focus is not on circumstances or external success, but on spiritual depth. He asks that the Holy Spirit would empower believers so that Christ would dwell *fully* in their hearts.

This prayer builds progressively: strength through the Spirit, the indwelling presence of Christ, a deep understanding of His love, and ultimately being filled with the fullness of God. Paul ends with a powerful reminder that God is able to do far more than we can ask or imagine. This passage teaches us that real spiritual maturity is not about activity but about intimacy, rooted in Christ’s love and transformed by His power for His glory.

2. Opening

Prayer:

Father, we echo Paul's prayer. We come before You in humility, recognizing that we need Your strength, not our own. Help us to depend on You and not try to live the Christian life on our own effort. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Icebreaker question:

Ask:

“What is something in your life that requires strength beneath the surface?”

3. Scripture Reading

Have someone read Ephesians 3:14-21 out loud.

4. Teaching Points (Systematic Walkthrough)

In verses 14–15, Paul begins with a posture of prayer, kneeling before the Father in humility and dependence. This posture reminds us that the Christian life doesn't begin with effort, but with surrender. Paul acknowledges God as both sovereign and personal—the One from whom every family derives its name—setting the tone that everything that follows flows from His authority and care. Real strength in the Christian life begins not by striving, but by bowing low before God.

In verses 16–17, Paul prays that believers would be strengthened with power through the Holy Spirit in their inner being. This strength is not external or circumstantial. This is internal and spiritual, enabling believers to endure, remain faithful, and grow in Christ. The result of this strengthening is that Christ dwells in our hearts through faith, not as a guest, but as one who takes full residence. As the Spirit strengthens us, Christ begins to shape every part of our lives, transforming our desires, thoughts, and actions from the inside out.

In verses 17–19, Paul moves to the depth of Christ's love, praying that believers would be rooted and grounded in it. He describes this love in four dimensions—breadth, length, height, and depth—emphasizing that it is immeasurable and beyond full comprehension. Yet, even though it surpasses knowledge, it is meant to be experienced. This love becomes the foundation of spiritual stability and maturity. The more we grasp and live in Christ's love, the more we are transformed by it, leading us toward the ultimate goal of being filled with all the fullness of God.

Finally, in verses 20–21, Paul erupts into praise, reminding us that God is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to His power at work within us. This shifts the focus from our limitations to God's limitless ability. The Christian life is not sustained by our strength, but by His power working in us. As a result, all glory belongs to Him in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations. When we experience His strength, His presence, and His love, the natural response is worship.

5. Discussion Questions

1. What stands out to you most in Ephesians 3:14-21?
2. What stands out to you about Paul's prayer in this passage?
3. Why do you think Paul focuses on inner strength rather than external circumstances?
4. What does it look like for Christ to "dwell" in your heart in a practical, everyday sense?
5. How have you personally experienced the love of Christ in a way that changed you?
6. What would it look like for you to trust that God can do more than you ask or imagine this week?

6. Application

This week, prioritize time with God not as a task, but as a place of strengthening. Spend intentional time in prayer, asking the Spirit to strengthen your inner life and help you experience the love of Christ in a deeper way.

7. Closing Prayer

Prayer:

“Father, fill us with Your fullness and use our lives to bring You glory. Let everything we do point back to You, in our church and in every generation. In Jesus’ name, amen.”

8. Memory Verse

„Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us,”

Ephesians 3:20

