

The Glory of God in the Power of Christ

Pastor Paul Springer | Ephesians 1:15-23
January 14, 2018 | Winter Cycle: Week 1 of 10

Personal Connection (25 minutes)

Icebreaker

Have you ever encountered something or had an experience that is extremely hard to wrap your mind around (ex., the expanse of the cosmos)?

Ups and Downs

Q. Did you experience Christ's presence this past week? Were you able to spend some time reading the Bible or in prayer?

Praying for each other

Take a moment to pray for each other. Pray for spiritual strength and guidance to grow in areas of vulnerability with the group.

Sharing Christ

Q. Is there someone with whom God is leading you to share Christ or to build a relationship, with that in mind?

Last week's sermon focused on how the gracious blessings of God have all come to us in Christ. God's blessing to us is that, through Christ, we can know God intimately. We have been chosen for salvation and are adopted as his children. We experience his forgiveness, his insight, the gifts of the Holy Spirit, the power to do God's will, and knowing we will live forever with Christ!

Q. There is nothing greater than knowing Christ intimately! Have you ever felt like you truly grasped how great he is?

Digging Deeper (30 minutes)

This Week's Key Concept:

The power of Christ working in and through our church comes from trusting Christ alone, both individually and corporately as a body of believers.

Read Ephesians 1:15-23

Ephesians 1:15-16 reveals Paul's gratitude for the church in Ephesus as he thanks God for them and remembers them in his prayers. We grow closer to the Lord and to each other as we recognize that one of God's great blessings to us is our brothers and sisters in the faith.

Q. When you are lifting up your concerns to the Lord with another brother or sister in Christ, does it feel different than when you pray alone? Describe your experience.

Q. How does it make you feel to know that others are lifting your needs up in prayer?

Q. In your personal prayer life, have you ever thanked God for the church, either locally or globally?

There is power in prayer! Having a conversation with the Lord builds a trusting relationship with him. God is present and active to us individually and as we meet to worship, pray, and praise his name together.

Ephesians 1:16-19 says that in Paul's prayers for the church of Ephesus, he asks God: 1) to give them spiritual wisdom and insight so they will grow in their knowledge of God; 2) to flood their hearts with the light of the Lord, giving them confident hope in the riches of God's glorious inheritance to his holy people; and 3) to understand the greatness of God's power for those who believe in him.

Q. How should we use Paul's example to pray for ourselves, each other, and the church?

Q. What action would you take in response to God answering your prayers? Would your grateful response lead you to getting more involved in Kingdom growth, either inside and outside the walls of Northwest? Explain what this could look like for you.

Reread Ephesians 1:19-23

Q. What kind of power is Paul referring to in these verses? How did God reveal his power through Christ?

In Ephesians 1:22-23, Paul describes how God has put all things under the authority of Jesus Christ, setting him as head over the church. The church is his body; it is made full and complete by Christ, who fills all things everywhere with himself.

Q. The body is a metaphor for the church. Is this a helpful image to you? Why or why not?

Q. Thinking of the church as a body, what role do your gifts play in strengthening the body? Others might be able to answer this question on your behalf, if you are unsure. *(Note: If you agree to let Jesus Christ be your leader and Lord, you have been given gifts by his Holy Spirit).*

Impact Questions

Q. What is it about consistently reading the Bible and praying that builds a trusting relationship with God? How does developing authentic relationships with other believers build your trusting relationship with God, as well?

Q. Would you say that your relationship with Christ has ever inspired you to love others in a radical way?

Whether we recognize it or not, the glory of God and the power of Christ is on display in our daily lives. How great it is that God chose us to accomplish his will! We are united as a body in and through Christ. Nothing will ever separate us from God's love.

Romans 8:38-39 (NLT) -- And I am convinced that nothing can ever separate us from God's love. Neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither our fears for today nor our worries about tomorrow -- not even the powers of hell can separate us from God's love. No power in the sky above or in the earth below -- indeed, nothing in all creation will ever be able to separate us from the love of God that is revealed in Christ Jesus our Lord.

What now? (15 minutes)

This week, pray that God would radically change your heart to show love to others in ways you don't fully understand, yet. God is on the move at Northwest! Ask him how you can be part of his beautiful master plan for this church.

Closing Prayer (15 minutes)

Please share your prayer requests and praises, so that your LIFE Group may lift you up in prayer. Please pray that the church and surrounding community would be revived in Christ's name. Pray that the Lord would help you to see how to put your prayers into action.