

The Strength to Know Love

Pastor Paul Springer | Ephesians 3:14-21
February 25, 2018 | Winter Cycle: Week 7 of 10

Personal Connection (25 minutes)

Icebreaker

Remember when you were a child and you knowingly did something naughty? When your parents found out, how did you react? Did you run and hide? Did you express sorrow and seek forgiveness and comfort?

Ups and Downs

How has your week been going? Are you struggling with anything in particular? Anything good you can share?

Praying for each other

Pray for the members of your group that each one would encourage the others to seek a closer relationship with the Lord.

Sharing Christ

If your LIFE Group has encouraged you to share Christ with others, share specifics. Thank them and thank God for them.

Review Last Sunday's *What Now?*

Last week, Rev. Hamer preached about the different levels of spiritual depth and our willingness to “swim” in the river, known as life in Jesus Christ. Are you willing to allow the Lord to lead your life, especially in your daily routines?

Digging Deeper (30 minutes)

This Week's Key Concept:

Human language is too limited to wholly and adequately describe the scope of God's love for us.

Read Ephesians 3:14-21

The Apostle Paul fervently prayed for strength for the church of Ephesus.

Q. How do you pray for the people in your church family? In your LIFE Group? Does your LIFE Group just pray for healing, safety, and provision, or do they pray for God to transform each member from the inside out?

Note: The strength the Apostle Paul is referring to is the power the Holy Spirit gives to affect not just what we say and do, but who we are on the inside; the power to be strong, faithful, and loving through Jesus Christ.

Q. Why do you think the Apostle Paul focuses on praying for our inner transformation rather than changed circumstances?

In Ephesians 3:17-18, the Apostle Paul describes how the Lord's strength leads to faith and understanding.

Q. How does relying on the Holy Spirit's power allow you to live a life like Paul describes? Do you believe it's possible to live an abundant life (as Jesus described in John 10:10), a flourishing life?

Q. When you go through difficult times and seek God's help, would you say that he more often reveals helpful insight to you about your situation, supplies the faith to get through it, or resolves the situation?

In Ephesians 3:17-21, the Apostle Paul explains about knowing the love of God; a love that surpasses any earthly knowledge and a love that is profoundly complete in ways to which nothing else compares.

Q. What does the Apostle Paul's imagery in these verses reveal about God's love for us? How would you describe Christ's love?

Q. What does it mean to know God's love? How does knowing God's love result in strength, faith, and understanding?

Impact Questions

Q. Has the Lord's love, living in you, impacted your ability to show love to someone in an unexpected way? Please share.

Q. What kind of changes would you like to see love impact? How can your LIFE Group be part of showing love (for example, a group ministry project)?

Q. What actions are you taking (or going to take) to fill your "love tank"?

Note: You are not meant to run on empty! Sharing the love of Christ becomes a daunting task, when you, by yourself, are running on short supply. Seek the Lord and fill-up!

Christ's love is multifaceted, an accumulation. His love reaches every corner of our experience. It is wide — it covers the breadth of our own experience, and it reaches out to the whole world. God's love is long — it continues the length of our lives. It is high — it rises to the heights of our joy. His love is deep — it reaches to the depths of discouragement, despair, and even death. When you feel shut-out or isolated, remember that you can never be lost to God's love.

What now? (15 minutes)

Be honest with yourself and with the Lord; if you are struggling with closeness, with life circumstances, with exhaustion, with peace, or anything that separates you from being close to him, won't you please talk to him about it? Your Father longs to be close to you and give you an abundance of love. Knowing God's love leads to amazing outcomes, and that starts with going to him, just as you are.

Closing Prayer (15 minutes)

Please share your prayer requests and praises, so that your LIFE Group may lift you up in prayer. Take time to meditate in prayer together about seeking a deeper relationship with the Lord; lift up your own relationship, and that of your brothers and sisters, with the Lord.