

Connect Group Discussion Guide

LEADER
EPHESIANS - PT 5
10/11/2026

PASSAGE SUMMARY

For a second time, Paul is moved to deep reverence and praise as he writes this letter to the Ephesian believers while imprisoned.

This results in another ultimate prayer that reflects God's fatherhood, triune nature, sovereignty, and glory.

The prayer contains three primary sections, asking for: strength, love, and fullness.

He ends with doxology (a short hymn, prayer, or expression of praise to God) and astonishment.

WARM UP

Open your group time with casual fellowship/questions. Taking a few minutes to connect before jumping into discussion helps create an environment where people feel known, valued, and ready to engage. See [Series Introduction](#) for tips and ideas.

READ THE PASSAGE

Ephesians 3:14-21

Read the passage in the ESV once through to get an idea for how it flows. Then have someone else read it slowly, pausing after each verse to be curious about it.

Ask questions of each verse, whatever arises in that moment of looking at it with fresh eyes. See if the group can search for answers to a few of those questions.

ENGAGE WITH THE PASSAGE

1. How is Paul's prayer full of reverence for God?

Bowing is only the first sign we get that that Paul's prayer comes from a place of reverence for God. Paul asks for God to answer "according to the riches of his glory." He also is praying with God in mind at all times--even the places where he's asking for things FOR THEM, it's all ABOUT HIM. Sometimes we make prayer a transition, an obligation, or just another task to fit in the day. Reverence reminds us we're talking to the Father over every family in heaven and earth, and we exist because of His love and for His glory.

BACKGROUND

Though we call this letter "Ephesians," it was likely delivered to several cities around Asia Minor, Ephesus being one of them.

Some of Paul's letters were more specific to a single church's issues or questions, but this one is more general.

Asia Minor was under Roman rule at the time, so Roman idolatry and social norms were a constant pressure on the Christians Paul was writing to.

TIPS FOR YOUR CONVERSATION

- You don't have to fill every silence. Ask the question, give people time to think, and resist the urge to answer it for them. Use a simple follow-up like, "What makes you say that?" or "Where do you see that in the passage?"
- You don't have to have all the answers, just help your group discover God's truth together!
- Feel free to break down any question into parts, especially when there are terms someone in your group might not understand. This gets everyone on the same page about what is being asked.

2. What does it mean for Christ to dwell in our hearts through faith? How does that shape the way we live?

New groups: Think about the concept of “dwell” and see where you can find it in other verses. What is dwelling? What is faith? How does faith make your heart a place where Christ can dwell?

Established groups: Following Jesus shapes how we respond to pain, handle conflict, make decisions, and relate to others. Are any of these areas more difficult to bring under Christ’s influence? Are there holdout spaces where you harbor old wounds, ungrieved losses, bitterness, or shame? Invite everyone to spend some time together in prayer, asking Jesus to reveal any areas they’ve been holding back from letting Christ fully abide in them. Give them time to confess these areas and ask for His help in surrendering them to His care and leadership. Together, pray for God’s Spirit to strengthen each person and help them become more deeply rooted and grounded in Christ’s love (vv. 16-19).

3. Look at John 1:14-18. How does this passage explain the “fullness” of Christ more?

Ideas may vary here. It may be useful to define “grace.” It is favor, love in action, and He chooses to give it freely--we don’t earn it by doing anything good or not doing anything bad. We experience His fullness through Christ’s love poured out when He is gracious to us.

4. Why do we need strength, of all things, to comprehend the love of Christ “that surpasses knowledge”?

These verses talk a lot about “knowing” that isn’t about whether you can recite a definition. It’s a lot about “comprehending” that isn’t something you get from a class. This is talking about something that comes from discipleship--which is walking alongside Jesus and doing what He does and learning from watching, listening, and experiencing. It’s a long path, and there will be times when we need strength, or we will sit down and stop following. But if we endure (good thing His Spirit gives us strength!), we will get to KNOW Him, His fullness, His love, and His strength.

5. What thing that Paul asked for do you need more of in this season? Strength from His Spirit, intimate knowledge of Christ’s love, or being filled with God’s fullness to a new degree?

Join Paul in praying for these things together. Though we may feel drawn toward one more than the others, these are all interconnected things. Together, they build us toward greater faith and maturity. We need them all, though one may receive special attention for a time.

NEXT STEPS

As you consider your next step, reflect on:

- 1) How can I pray out of reverence for God? What needs to change about how I pray?
- 2) How can I cultivate a sense of awe for God? Where can I go to spend time alone with Him?

Give your group a few moments to reflect on their answers to the questions above. Then have your group answer the question aloud. Feel free to separate into smaller groups of 2 or 3 for this question, so each person has others praying with them for the needs they’re taking before the throne.

SPIRITUAL PRACTICE FOR THE WEEK

Last week, we prayed for someone we might consider a “them.” How did that exercise in “loving your enemies” go?

This week, let’s practice being “rooted and grounded in love.” Here is a [link](#) to the “one another” verses in the New Testament. These commands teach active ways to love others better. Ask the Lord to show you which one you need to work on this week. Read about it in the context of its chapter and look for ways to live it out with those you encounter. (Yes, even enemies!)