

St. Paul's Dorking Small Groups July 19th 2009  
More Love...More Power!  
Empowering Resources - Ephesians 3:14 -21



Word: Key points from Sunday's sermon

When we began this series we realised that one of the key truths for us to engage with was that though God has given our church a precious gift of love for one another, we lack power. We determined that through studying Ephesians, where power is one of its great themes, we would seek God to better equip and empower us with his resources. Together we have explored a range of issues that affect our life together, concluding last week with 'empowering prayer.' Our key question as we conclude is: empowering resources, what are they? Simply put each one of us needs to be filled with His Spirit. St Paul, as he prays for the Church at Ephesus to be empowered and resourced has four petitions.

**We are to be rooted in love.** I remember how the roots of a willow tree began to undermine the foundations of my mother's bungalow. That willow was always lush and green because its roots went down deep. Even when there was a drought it remained green because its roots were sunk so deep. If you want to know what it means to be continually resourced and to live in Christ's' victory then sink your roots deep into Jesus Christ. (Cf. Ps. 1) To put down deep roots is an action of both the will and the heart to live in Him. The effect of this will be that we will know his abiding grace, love, and power.

**We are to be grounded (KJV) in the love of God.** The Greek word for grounded that Paul uses here means to build your home on a firm foundation. That foundation is the word of God, and the love of God for us in Christ. It is vital to be grounded firmly in Him and his word; but we need to take care that the word within us is inspired and directed by the Spirit. The letter alone kills, but it's the Spirit that gives life,(2 Cor 3:6). Another reason to be grounded firmly is because when the tempest blows, from time to time, shaking our vision and determination to go forward in him, we will need to know that our lives are grounded in the love of God. If they are grounded firm in Him, led by his Spirit, then we will know the love and power of God which can never be shaken – doesn't change – and which can't be moved, These first 2 petitions confirm that love is to be the soil in which our lives are to be rooted and love is to be the foundation on which our corporate life is built. It is a call to be both radical and fundamental

**We are to be surrounded by the love of Christ.** Writing to the Ephesians, Paul knew that they were surrounded by the most wonderful buildings and massive temples, bigger even than St Paul's in London. But in Christ we have something much greater and higher and wider and deeper, because the love of Christ that surrounds us now and always can never be measured in its wonder and depth. John Stott quoting Leslie Mitton draws the parallel between Ephesians 3:18 and Romans 8: 37 – 39; he goes on to say whether you go forward or backward, up to the heights or down to the depths nothing will separate us from the love of Christ. This petition has an important lesson for us in that in v18 Paul prays that we *may have power together with all the saints*. In this he confirms that it needs the whole people of God (young and old and in between) to understand the whole love of God

**We are to be filled with this precious love of God.** If we let him fill us and go on letting him fill us, then we will have found the centre of true Christian experience. This sense of being filled to the measure of all the fullness of God is inextricably linked with v16, that he may strengthen us with power, and v18, that we may have power with all the saints to grasp how wide and long and deep is the love of Christ. God's heart is that we should be daily growing towards that final fullness, as we are being transformed by the Holy Spirit into Christ's image from one degree of glory to another. St Paul has prayed that we may be given the strength of the Spirit and the ruling presence of Christ. The challenge is to remember that he is able *'to do immeasurably more than we can ask or imagine according to his power at work within (us)*. As His chosen resources we are in His team; He has chosen us to be part of his plans and purposes for He promises that He will empower us with His life and Spirit.



Witness: choose from these questions to discuss

1. Use Psalm 1 or Ps 63: 1 - 9 to lead you into prayer and worship as you begin your evening together
2. If you have access to all of this series' small group notes, share which of our current themes have had most impact on you and share why with one another. Pray into those areas the Spirit has highlighted for you.
3. Use Eph 3, Rom 8, Rom 12 and the 'Renewing our Vision' section of the termly booklet to open up your discussion on the following key questions:
  - a. Empowering resources, what are they?
  - b. What might God do in us and through us as individuals and as a church?
  - c. Are there areas of church life that you are being called to serve in?
4. Pray together that each of us would be filled with his love and power, hear his call and step out in faith into new areas of service for him.