



Saint James AME Church

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Rev. Dr. Ronald L. Slaughter, Senior Pastor

Women's Bible Study

Rev. Theresa Andrews, Minister to Women

First Lady Kyla Slaughter, Women's Ministry Advisor

Tuesdays at 6:15 PM

June 2, 2020

Rev. Janelle Y. Greene Smith, Facilitator

Subject: God's Marvelous Plan For Us -- Experience (Encounter) Spiritual Power

Book: Ephesians Chapter 3:12-21

Ephesians 3:12-21 (NIV)

¹²In him and through faith in him we may approach God with freedom and confidence. ¹³I ask you, therefore, not to be discouraged because of my sufferings for you, which are your glory.

A Prayer for the Ephesians

¹⁴For this reason I kneel before the Father, ¹⁵from whom every family^[a] in heaven and on earth derives its name. ¹⁶I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, ¹⁷so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, ¹⁸may have power, together with all

the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, ¹⁹and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

²⁰Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, ²¹to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen

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Subject of Consideration:

Paul's letter to the church at Ephesus came at a time in which the church needed encouragement. According to scholars, the Apostle Paul stayed in this early city for about 3 years (Acts 20:31) approx AD 51-54. Paul wrote this letter while in prison (As indicated in Chapter 3 verse 1); The central focus of this letter has to do with the re-creation of the human family according to God's original intent... God's kingdom purpose for humankind -- jews, gentiles, christians are brought together in Christ as One people. The distinctions between jew and gentile have been put away as a result of Jesus' death and sacrifice of himself on the cross. Because of Christ we are One family of believers. Paul refers to the new body, i.e. the Church being endowed with the power of the Holy Spirit. (This past Sunday we celebrated the Pentecost - the birth of the Church according to Acts 1. We have the Holy Spirit with us and in us. Paul stated at that time that Holy Spirit was given as an endowment to those who are part of the body of Christ to serve together in unity. Endowment is defined by *Oxford Languages* as having a quality or ability possessed or inherited by someone; or an income (something of value) bequeathed to someone. (See Ephesians 1:3, 2:10) to live lives of faith, to be effective witnesses for Christ, to be mature in God and to access the spiritual blessings that are ours who are seated in heavenly places with Christ.

Questions:

1. In what ways do Christians / Believers and followers of Jesus Christ access their spiritual power?
2. Are we able to grasp God's love?
3. What does Scripture indicate that God is able to do?

Homework:

Review the text and consider the following by journal during your devotional time with God: Are the places, spaces "rooms" in your life/heart where you need to re-invite Jesus to take residence? How are you re-gaining spiritual power and for what purpose? What does your thinking say about you and who you are? How do your thoughts inform your spiritual identity and ability? Write five things that you are decreeing over your life and desire to come to pass? Is it also to bless others?
Think of Ephesians 3:20-21