



Sermon Growth Guide

May 4, 2025

That Great Power

Ephesians 1:15-23

Key Verse: Ephesians 1:18-19a

"I pray the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know...his incomparably great power for us who believe."

Big Idea: When we pray, we connect ourselves with the presence and power of God.

Foundations

Why do we pray? Most of us start praying because deep down we know we are small and we need cosmic help when we are in trouble or in grief. And that's a good thing. But when we know Christ, God wants us to grow in our life of prayer. God wants us to pray so that we can live in his presence, unite ourselves with him, and be given the power to know him and be part of his coming kingdom. Paul's prayers in the book of Ephesians are embedded in the story of the Gospel, the unity of the body of Christ under the authority of the one triune God, and the new life that enables us to live. This fuels the way Paul prays. First and foremost, Paul prays continually ("I keep asking..."). Secondly, he begins with thanks ("...giving thanks for you.."). Finally, the Gospel changes what Paul asks for. He prays that the Ephesians will know God deeply. He prays that they will understand the hope of new life and the inheritance they will have with Christ. He prays that they will know God's power – the same power that raised Jesus from the dead – which is at work in and through both them and us. How unimaginable is that! This series is an opportunity. It's an opportunity to become a people who know God and his power, and who pray like Paul. We are the body of Jesus Christ, who is far above every power, rule, authority, and name on earth. God plans to change the world and we're part of the plan. It's time to become a people who pray. Amen!

Understanding God's Word

Read Ephesians 1:15-23. Please consider reading the whole book of Ephesians together and/or at home throughout the series. How is the Spirit connected to our prayers? What is the "hope" and "inheritance" Paul is talking about? How might it be connected to God putting all things under Jesus' feet and appointing him head of the church? (See also Psalm 8.)

Applying God's Word

How do you pray right now? In other words, what do you believe you are doing when you pray, and what kinds of things do you pray about? How does Paul challenge you to grow in your life of prayer?

Witnessing God's Word

At the end of Ephesians, Paul says: "Pray in the Spirit on all occasions and with all kinds of prayers and requests." (Ephesians 6:18a) This series is an opportunity to become a people who pray in the power of the Spirit. Please join us for "40 Days in a Spirit of Prayer." You can pick up a flyer in the Welcome Center or find more information at firstprescos.org/prayer40.

In his song When we Pray, Tauren Wells says: "All the world starts changing, when the church starts praying." So let's pray!