

STUDY TWO | EPHESIANS 1:15-23

RESURRECTED

Paul is really excited!

He's excited about something that might at first glance not seem particularly special ('faith in the Lord Jesus' and 'love for all God's people' v15). Yet as we will discover, these seemingly unspectacular characteristics of the Ephesian church are in fact direct evidence that God is doing something truly special, mighty and powerful among them. The logic is this - because there is evidence that the Ephesians are trusting in the Lord Jesus, accompanied by evidence that the Ephesians are showing a radical counter cultural kind of love for each other, Paul is now compelled to pray for them even more. Why? Because as we discover, the power that moves someone from unbelief to belief, is actually of the same magnitude, the same source, the same type, as the power that raised Jesus Christ from the dead. Think of it this way – how easy is it for people, in their own strength, to come back to life? Not very! How easy is it for people, in their own strength, to know Jesus, to know their future hope, to know their inheritance, to know and love the new family God has called us to be part of? According to these verses, this too is impossible in our own strength! In fact it takes the same mighty power that raised Christ from the dead. And Paul is now so excited because he actually sees evidence of this power at work in the Ephesian church, because he has heard of their *faith* in the Lord Jesus and their accompanying counter cultural, cross-cultural *love* for each other — this could only be the result of God's powerful work. And so he wants them to know just how magnificent the work that God is doing (and will continue to do) among them really is. It is the same power that raised Christ from the dead.

A NEW HUMANITY

APRIL 25

EPHESIANS 1:1-14 REDEEMED

MAY 2

EPHESIANS 1:15-23 RESURRECTED

MAY 9

EPHESIANS 2:1-10 RESTORED

MAY 16

EPHESIANS 2:11-22 RECONCILED

MAY 23

EPHESIANS 3:1-13 REVEALED

MAY 30

EPHESIANS 3:14-21 RENEWED

JUNE 6

EPHESIANS 4:1-16 REBUILT

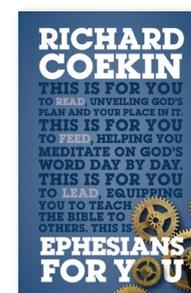
JUNE 13

EPHESIANS 4:17-5:2 REPENTANT

JUNE 20

EPHESIANS 5:3-20 REGENERATE

RESOURCE



RICHARD COEKIN | EPHESIANS FOR YOU

(GOD'S WORD FOR YOU SERIES)

GETTING STARTED

1. Share an example of a type of work or job that might appear unimpressive and mundane to an outsider but for those who understand what's really going on, it's extraordinary and even awe inspiring?

INTO THE TEXT

READ VERSES 15-16

2. Paul lists two pieces of evidence – the Ephesians' 'faith in the Lord Jesus' and also their 'love for all God's people' as the trigger for him to be extra thankful and prayerful. What is the connection between these two things? Why do you think Paul mentions both?
3. If a church had a reputation for possessing only one of these two things (ie known for trusting Jesus OR known for loving each other), what might be the danger for that church in each case?
4. Having heard of their authentic faith demonstrated in action, Paul moves from thanksgiving to prayer. Without reading ahead what might you expect Paul to ask God for on behalf of the Ephesians?

READ VERSES 17-18

5. What does Paul actually ask God for?
6. Why is this so important?
7. How do these prayer requests compare to your typical prayer requests?

READ VERSES 19-20

8. What gives Paul confidence to pray these prayers? Do you share his confidence?

READ VERSES 20-23

9. What comes to mind when you read v20-23? What kind of images and thoughts do you think about? Are they mundane, every day kind of things? Or are they glorious, magnificent, royal, cosmic kind of things?

10. 'What do you think is the connection between vs 20-23 and vs 15-19? What might Paul be teaching us about how we should think about the work God is doing in his church?

11. What is the significance of Paul connecting 'the power for us who believe' with 'the power ... he exerted when he raised Christ from the dead'?

TAKEAWAY

12. Looking back at today's passage, does your thinking around the significance of God's work, measure up with Paul's thinking? Is this something you may need to repent of? Take some time to do that today.'

13. What would it look like in your life and our church life if we shared Paul's excitement, confidence and prayerful anticipation regarding God's magnificent work?

14. Share with each other, somebody you would like to pray the prayer in vs17-19 for. Take some time to pray together.