

Spiritual Growth

KEY VERSES

Ephesians 3:14-21

KEY THEMES

Spiritual growth is a supernatural process

TEACHING NOTES

Spiritual growth is supernatural

Spiritual growth is a process

... that requires trust, understanding, and experience

INTRODUCTION

INNOCENCE

CONSCIENCE

HUMAN GOVT.

PROMISE

LAW

GRACE

Spiritual growth produces:

Power

Strength

Stability

Fullness of life

Great change

Lesson objective: *To see a picture of what spiritual maturity looks like through Paul's prayer for the Ephesians.*

PERSONAL STUDY**Prepare your heart and mind**

Take a few minutes to pause and pray. Ask God to help you make sure that the tasks of today don't become a distraction while you're focusing on this time of study and hearing from Him.

Read Ephesians 3:14-21***A Prayer for the Ephesians***

For this reason I kneel before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name. I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may 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, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

Now 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, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.

Spiritual growth is a process

Based on this passage, we see that spiritual growth is a supernatural process. It is a process that requires trust, understanding, and experience. It is a process that produces power, strength, stability, fullness of life, and great change.

Take a few minutes to think about your personal faith journey as it relates to this prayer in Ephesians 3. Then answer the following questions:

How has your spiritual growth process required trust, understanding, and experience?

How has it produced power, strength, stability, fullness of life, and great change?

This passage is a prayer written to and for a specific group of people – the church at Ephesus. But just like other New Testament passages that weren't written to us specifically, it is for us. We can and should read it, learn from it, and apply the truth found within it to our own lives. A great way to do that with this specific section of scripture is to personalize the prayer.

Read through the prayer that has been edited to function as a prayer for our church:

A Prayer for WCC

*For this reason I kneel before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name. I pray that out of His glorious riches He may strengthen **us** with power through His Spirit in **our** inner beings, so that Christ may dwell in **our** hearts through faith. And I pray that **we**, being rooted and established in love, may 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, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that **we** may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.*

Now 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, to Him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.

In what ways would WCC look differently if this prayer was answered?

What steps could you take to live out the truth of this prayer in your relationships and involvements here at WCC?

Now read through the prayer that has been tailored to fit you as an individual:

A Prayer for Myself

*For this reason I kneel before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name. I pray that out of His glorious riches He may strengthen **me** with power through His Spirit in **my** inner being, so that Christ may dwell in **my** heart through faith. And I pray that **I**, being rooted and established in love, may 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, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that **I** may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.*

*Now to Him who is able to do immeasurably more than all **I** ask or imagine, according to His power that is at work within **me**, to Him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.*

In what ways would your life look differently if this prayer was answered?

What steps could you take to live out the truth of this prayer?

Remember, spiritual growth is a process. And it a process that God is doing in us through the Holy Spirit. We should be encouraged by that. It isn't up to what we can manage in our own effort. Rather, it is God at work in and through us. We should also rest in the fact that we're in the middle of this process. God isn't expecting perfection from us, just that we would show up and respond to His leading.

Prayer time

End your time of study in prayer. Thank God for the spiritual growth process He is leading you through. Ask Him to help you desire growth and be willing to submit to His leading in your life.

