



THE WORD FOR TODAY

Ephesians 3, verses 14-21

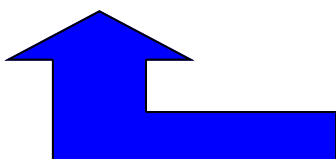
Paul's prayer for the church in Ephesus

Paul was in prison in Rome, and he was writing to the folk who made up the church in Ephesus (in modern-day Turkey) to encourage them to stand firm, and above all to hold on to their faith in Jesus. He hoped the letter would be passed on to other churches once it had been read in Ephesus.

Paul knew the Ephesians would be concerned that he was in prison and might be discouraged. Would they manage to keep the church together? Would they continue to reach out in love to those around them? He knew that they needed to keep Jesus at the centre of their lives.

This is a good prayer to pray ourselves for other people and for ourselves. It reminds us of God's power and love and the importance of holding on to our faith in Jesus.

Follow these words of Paul's prayer, beginning on the north wall of this little building and then continuing anti-clockwise round the church building, perhaps pausing on the benches if the weather is good. We are using the New International Version of the Bible, which you can find on the internet under Bible Gateway, and the whole "Word for Today" is on the church website, which is www.libertonkirk.net



Turn immediately left to find the first verse of the Bible passage on the bench

***“For this reason I kneel before the
Father, from whom his whole
family in heaven and on earth
derives its name.”***

1

Two thoughts:

We have a loving father in heaven we can approach at any time with our thoughts and prayers—on our knees, walking along a footpath, sitting quietly in a chair, at the top of a hill, wherever. How good is that?

We are part of a family—the family of God’s children. Amazingly that unites us not only with others on earth but also with those in heaven. What a great thought! A sense of belonging, but also of course a sense of responsibility, a duty of care.



***Loving Father, thank you for your love and care for me
and for all your children.
Help me to love and care for the others in your family.***

(No. 2 is on the bench facing us at the corner of the church building)



THE WORD FOR TODAY

“I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being”

2



Have you ever had that wonderful feeling that today you could do anything? If we believe in Jesus, then we are promised the gift of the Holy Spirit, the presence of God with us always. With us and within us—giving us strength to cope with anything life can throw at us. And so much more! Enabling us to do things which might seem just too difficult—pointing us in the right direction, comforting, renewing. Yes, the Holy Spirit can do all these things—it is the Spirit of God himself..

***Lord, thank you for the gift of the Holy Spirit.
Thank you for the inner strength it gives me.
Help me to realise the power which is within me.***

(Turn round the side of the church to find No. 3)



THE WORD FOR TODAY

***“... so that Christ may dwell in
your hearts through faith.”***

3



I have been up more hills than I care to remember where when I reach “the top”, I find there are a couple more “tops” which have to be climbed if I am to say that I have conquered that hill! When the Holy Spirit comes to us, this is the third part in what we call “the Trinity” - God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit, three in one. A concept quite difficult to get your head round. It is perhaps easier when you remember that God showed himself to us in Jesus, a human being we find easy to relate to, and that when the Risen Jesus returned to heaven, he promised the Holy Spirit would come.

Jesus with us in Spirit is not just passing through—he is here to stay—all we have to do is believe! I like to think of my best friend always with me, arm round my shoulders. With him I won’t lose my way and I am safe and happy.

***Lord Jesus, precious companion,
thank you for being with me always.
Help me to lean on you for everything.***

(No. 4 is further along this side of the church)



THE WORD FOR TODAY

“I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ . . .”

4

If a tree isn't planted properly it will rock in the wind and its roots will be disturbed. It will not grow well. Paul wants people to put down good roots of faith so that nothing will shake them and they will be able to rejoice and grow in the limitless love of Jesus.

What a joy it is to know that Jesus loves me, no matter what!



***Lord, help me to know that I am loved unconditionally
with a love beyond my imagining.
Hold my faith firm and strong to appreciate that love.***

(Walk along the back of the church and turn left to find No. 5)



THE WORD FOR TODAY

“... and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.”

5



In the extremes of weather we get nowadays we often see rivers and lakes overflowing and our gutters showering water everywhere—the water is unstoppable.

If we can just grasp what God's love is like then it becomes part of the fabric of our lives. We have that love within us, like water, filled to the brim and ready to overflow to others.

Jesus did say to all of us that the two most important things were to love God and to love other people (our neighbours) as ourselves; he would never ask us to do things if it were impossible for us.

***Lord, your love is beyond my understanding.
Help me to know that love within me
and to have the desire and will to pass it on to others.***

(No. 6 is at the other side of the church tower)



THE WORD FOR TODAY

***“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”***

6



Whenever we think that following Jesus is just too hard, that loving everybody is just too difficult, that we might as well give up, then this is a reminder that God's power is in us in his Holy Spirit, and can help us achieve the things we think are beyond us.

***Lord, forgive us when we forget your power.
Forgive us when we forget that you want to work through us.
Help us to be bold and to take your love to a needy world.***

(Turn left to find No. 7 at the front of the church)



THE WORD FOR TODAY

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

7



God deserves to be glorified, and he will be when his people show his love to all around them. What a wonderful world it would be if everyone were to try to have love and respect for their fellow human beings and for their maker. The world as God planned it!

Paul speaks to us now just as he spoke to the people at Ephesus. Here we are now, hundreds of generations later, and it's our job to glorify God in our lives.

***Lord, we pray for the world.
May your love be shown and your name be known.
May your kingdom come.***

(There is hand sanitiser in the Offering House by the gate if you would like to use it.)

If anything you have read has prompted questions you would like to discuss, please contact John Young on 664 3067 or jyoung@churchofscotland.org.uk



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