



VIRTUAL WINTER CAMP DEVOTIONALS

The devotionals below will dive into the theme verse, Ephesians 3:14-19. Whether Ephesians is a familiar book to you or not, we pray that as you spend time in the Word of God you come to know Him better. Ephesians 1:17 Paul prays for his fellow believers; "I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know Him better." Our prayer for not only you, but for our own lives, shares the heart of Paul; that we may know God better. Our prayer is not just that we would know God better for the sake of knowing a lot about God, but to know God more fully as we spend time in His word and that the knowledge we have would transform our hearts and minds to live a life of full surrender and obedience to God.

This theme is about being filled with the fullness of God so that we overflow the fullness we experience onto those around us. Our world desperately needs the good news of Jesus Christ, and as disciples of Jesus we are the ones to proclaim the truth of Christ's saving work to a world that needs Him. Let us be people who find fulfillment in Jesus Christ alone, not getting caught up in the ways of the world, are transformed by the Word of God, and share with those around us all that has been done for us. We pray that each new day, we desire to know God more fully.

Whether you are working through these devotionals at a home group, youth group or as an individual, you may have questions that come up. As we study the Word of God, we won't have all the answers and sometimes we may feel alone in that. Because we aren't together at camp and won't have the ability to work through some of these questions together, we encourage you to talk to your youth leader, Pastor, a family member, or friend who can help answer questions that come up and point you to the Word of God.

THEME VERSE: EPHESIANS 3:14-19

14 For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, 15 from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named, 16 that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being, 17 so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith—that you, being rooted and grounded in love, 18 may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, 19 and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.



Ephesians 1, 2, & 3:14-15

The book of Ephesians is a letter Paul wrote to the believers in Ephesus. The first three chapters unfold God's plan for humanity - for both Jews and Gentiles. Paul writes that this plan for humanity is the mystery of God that has been made known in Jesus Christ (Eph. 3:4-6), and therefore because of this great grace in which we have received, Paul writes what we should believe as Christians. In the first two chapters, Paul reminds the believers of all that God has done and how that changes everything; past, present and future.

Read Ephesians 1.

1. *What do we learn from reading Ephesians 1?*

- *What do we learn about God? (Eph.1:4)*
- *What do we learn about Jesus? (Eph.1:5-9;22-23)*
- *What do we learn about ourselves in light of what has been done for us? (Eph.1:4-8;11-14)*

Read Ephesians 2.

2. *What do we learn from reading Ephesians 2?*

- *What do we learn about ourselves? (Eph.2:1-3;19-22)*
- *How are we reconciled, or made right, before God? (Eph. 2:4-10)*
- *Is this anything we could have done on our own accord? (Eph.2:8-9)*

We conclude chapter 1 and 2, reminded of all that has been done for us through God the Father's plan from the beginning and how that plan unfolded through the person and work of Jesus Christ. The knowledge of this plan brings Paul to a point of praise in Ephesians 3.

Read Ephesians 3:1-15.

3. *Why is Paul brought to his knees in praise in Eph 3:14? (Eph.3:6)*

After Paul proclaims the good news for both Jew and Gentile, he is brought to his knees in praise!! For those of us who claim Jesus as our Savior; having confessed with our mouth that He is Lord and believed in our heart that God raised Him from the dead (Rom. 10:9) we are saved. This truth is available for all people, and it is our responsibility, like Paul, to proclaim this truth to a world that needs Jesus. Spend time in prayer and thank God for His grace and mercy that he extends to all that call upon him. Ask Him to instill in you a great urgency for the lost and boldness to proclaim the truth of the good news of Jesus Christ.



Ephesians 3:16-17

"16 that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being, 17 so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith-"

As followers of Christ, we are equipped with the Holy Spirit. There is no such thing as a believer who does not have The Holy Spirit living within them. Often we hear questions such as "What is the Holy Spirit?" but to the disciples and to believers today, The Holy Spirit is not an it, but rather a who. The Holy Spirit is a person, not a thing. The Holy Spirit sparks much interest today, but sadly even more confusion. To many, there is ambiguity surrounding the nature and function of the Holy Spirit. Before Jesus ever left, He told us how the Holy Spirit is going to work, by "bringing to your remembrance the things that I have said" (John 14:25-26). God's spirit does not work in revealing to us new things outside of scripture, but works through what Jesus has already said. God's spirit works through His word (John 14:26), illuminates our minds to understand and apply God's truth (1 Corinthians 2:13), and empowers us to live out the Christian life.

As believers, we are given the strength of the Holy Spirit so that we may live lives set apart from the world. This is not something we are capable of on our own, but are granted this gift of a Helper by the Father. When Christ ascended, he told his disciples that he would be leaving a Helper (John 14:25-26). While it is difficult to understand, Jesus said to His disciples that it is better for Him to go so that the Holy Spirit can come to dwell in believers (John 16:1-7).

Romans 8:26-27

1. *In the verses we read, what are ways the Holy Spirit works in, and guides the believer?*

- *Are you allowing the Holy Spirit to be a helper in your life?*
- *What is an area, or areas, in your life where you are not relying on the help of the Holy Spirit?*
- *Why is it important that we be strengthened by the Spirit?*

The disciples had Jesus walking with them daily, and throughout the New Testament we see time and again that they doubted his power and forgot who He was. Imagine then, for us today, who do not have a physical Jesus walking with us, how easy it is to forget the power of the Holy Spirit that dwells in the life of the believer. Take some time to pray and ask God to reveal to you the areas of your life in which you are not relying on the help of the Holy Spirit, and thank God for the gift of the Holy Spirit in your life as a believer.



DEVOTIONAL 3



Ephesians 3:17-19

Ephesians 3:17-19 "17 that you, being rooted and grounded in love, 18 may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, 19 and to know the love of Christ that surpassed knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God."

As humans, innately in each of us is the desire to seek satisfaction and fulfillment. We constantly try to fill ourselves with things of this world that will both leave us with a false sense of satisfaction and ultimately empty. We turn to the approval of others, achievements, awards, grades, social media, knowledge, gossip, etc. When we seek satisfaction in the things of this world, we fill ourselves with everything but the One who can truly satisfy us, Jesus Christ. Ultimately, if we are not filled with Christ, this world can only leave us empty. The only way for us to be filled with all the fullness of God is through the gift of His son, Jesus Christ. Jesus came to restore, or make right, our relationship with God the Father, which we could never do on our own.

Ephesians 3:17-19, Paul writes that being rooted and grounded in love for one another and for God, that we would comprehend the love of Christ. He writes that we can understand the breadth and length and height and depth, although we may never fully grasp such love this side of eternity. Verse 19, Paul writes that the love of Christ is something we can know, not just something we feel. Paul desired Christians to experience life in Jesus Christ, the fullness of God (Colossians 2:9), and to be filled to their capacity with Jesus.

Read Colossians 2:9-1

1. What does Colossians 2:9 mean?
 - Why is it important to understand that the fullness of God dwells in the person of Christ?
 - If the fullness of God dwells in the person of Christ, how can we experience the fullness of God?
2. Make a list of things you are prioritizing over spending time with God.
3. Set aside time each day to spend with God in prayer and in His word, and ask Him to instill in you a desire to seek nothing else but Jesus Christ.

We can only be filled with the fullness of God if we have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. Spend time in prayer and ask God to reveal to you the areas in which you are seeking to be filled in ways that are not of God. Ask the Lord to reveal areas you have not surrendered to Him (Psalm 139:23-24), and lastly thank Him for providing a way to enter His fullness.



DEVOTIONAL 4



Ephesians 3:20-21

20 Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, 21 to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

When we place our faith in Jesus Christ, confessing with our mouth that Jesus is Lord and believing in our heart that God raised him from the dead (Romans 10:9), there is an internal change that takes place; we surrender our hearts to God and are given the Holy Spirit that dwells within us, lives within us. This transformation doesn't stop there. As a reflection of the internal change within us, we must outwardly live a life set apart from the world. Jesus tells us that if we love Him, we will keep His commandments (John 14:15). God has made a way for us to be in relationship with Him through Jesus Christ, and through Jesus we can experience all the fullness of God. Paul writes in Ephesians 3:21 that the only fitting and appropriate response to our holy, gracious and merciful God is to give Him glory.

Read 1 Peter 1:14-16

1. What does it mean to conform to the passions of your former ignorance?
 - Can there be a lasting change in our outward behaviors without an internal change in our hearts? Why?
2. Why, for the life of a believer, are we called to be holy?

Read Matthew 5:14-16

1. Why are we called to be a light to the world?
 - Have you been living as a light to be shared or have you been trying to hide your light?
 - What are some ways you can share your light with others in your everyday life?
 - Make a list of people you regularly interact with who you could share the gospel with. Commit to sharing the gospel with one of them this month.

The gift of salvation is a free gift offered for all (Ephesians 2:8-9), and as Christians we are to proclaim this truth to a world that is in desperate need. Jesus' final words before He ascended into Heaven was to make disciples of all nations (Matthew 28:18-20). As we think about all Jesus Christ has done for us, the only proper response is a life lived in full surrender and obedience to Him, giving Him all the glory. Spend some time in prayer and thank God for making a way through Jesus Christ that we may spend eternity with Him. Ask God to instill in you a desire and urgency to proclaim His word to a dying world.