

DEEP SIX STUDY

March 8th, 2026

***New Light* – “You’re Stronger Than You Think”**

MESSAGE HIGHLIGHTS *(You can view the full message online at capecodchurch.com)*

Summary: (Ephesians 3:14-21) – As we continue our study of Ephesians, Paul offers a passionate prayer that his fellow believers would experience not just the *presence* of the Holy Spirit, but the active *power* of the Spirit in their daily lives. The message presses a vital truth: a Christian can “have” the Spirit and yet live without (“have not”) his power, much like a house fully wired for electricity but cut off from the grid. The path from powerless to powerful runs through understanding, experience, and a deliberate drawing close to God through community, prayer, obedience, and surrender to Christ.

1. You Can “Have” but “Have Not” (Ephesians 3:14-18)

- As Paul made clear back in 1:13-14, the Holy Spirit is given fully at the moment of salvation; every believer already “has” the Spirit as a guarantee of their inheritance. Yet Paul prays that believers would be “empowered with inner strength through his Spirit” — pointing to the reality that just because the Spirit is inside us, we don’t necessarily experience his power — we “have not.”
- Two things are required to “activate” the power (strength) of the Holy Spirit that’s inside of us. The first is *understanding*. “Outer strength” most often depends on our circumstances; if things are going well and we’re feeling well, we feel strong — but when our lives go off the rails a bit, we quickly begin to feel weak and powerless. As Paul reminds us, “inner strength” comes from being “filled with understanding” of the power and strength of God, who seeks to lead and empower us.
- If we allow him to, the Holy Spirit will guide us, convict us of error, fill us with hope, and give us endurance to persevere through our circumstances. The primary tool he uses to do all that is his Word; “If you’re not reading and studying his Scripture, you’re not being led by the Holy Spirit.”

2. Come Closer to the Power God has for You (Ephesians 3:14, 18^{NIV}, 19-21)

- But understanding — knowing God’s Word and the work of God’s Spirit — is just the first requirement for tapping into his power. As Paul reminds us, the second key is that we must *experience* Christ’s love by drawing closer and closer to him. It’s not “either/or” (knowledge OR experience) that’s important for gaining the inner strength that God offers — it’s “both/and.”
- To “draw close to God” and fully activate the strength and power of the Holy Spirit inside of us, Paul offers four specific actions/requirements that we must faithfully pursue:
 - a. *Together* (v. 18^{NIV}) — in 3:18, Paul reminds us that the first key to fully experiencing God’s power and presence is that we are to do it “together with all the Lord’s holy people” — that is, in the community of believers, his church. Apart from that community, we will quickly “grow cold.”
 - b. *Prayer* (v. 14) — to tap into God’s strength, we must communicate with him in a regular, intimate way. Tim Keller recommends a 3-phase prayer process: read God’s Word, meditate on it, then pray to God for understanding, guidance and wisdom.
 - c. *Obedience* (v. 14) — “I fall to my knees...” The third key to experiencing God and his power is *surrender* — recognizing and living like he has ultimate authority over your life and how you live it.

- d. Christ (v. 19) – most importantly, experiencing God means seeing him through Jesus –immersing yourself in who he is, what he’s said, and what he’s done for us. THEN you will experience his love – and the power (inner strength) that he offers to live out the life he’s called you to.

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURE

These passages may provide additional insights related to the subject of this week’s message. All verses are NLT unless otherwise noted.

Joshua 1:9; Jeremiah 29:11-13; John 2:3-6; John 17:1-3; Hebrews 10:23-25; 2 Peter 1:3-7

Video of the Week: [Meod/Strength](#) by the Bible Project

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION AND DISCUSSION

1. On a scale of 1-10, with 1 being “wiring-only” and 10 being “fully powered” by the Spirit, where would you honestly place yourself this week? Explain your answer.
2. Paul makes clear that a believer can have the Spirit of God inside of them (Ephesians 1:13-14) but not experience or use the immeasurable power and strength the Spirit offers. What, exactly, is wrong with that – with being “saved” but not living a life filled with God’s power and strength?
3. Ephesians 3:18 says to fully grasp the love of Christ we should do it “together” with God’s people. In your view, why is “meeting together” (Hebrews 10:23) with other believers so important?
4. We know that “obedience” (living God’s way) isn’t required for salvation / eternal life. So why is obedience so important to experiencing the love, power and strength that God offers us today?
5. Of the four pathways — community, prayer, obedience, and experiencing Christ — which one are you most tempted to skip, and what would it take to stop skipping it?
6. What is one concrete step you could take this week to “move the couch closer to the fireplace” — to draw nearer to God? What’s preventing you from taking that step?

You're Stronger Than You Think: Unlocking God's Inner Power

THE PARADOX OF POWER

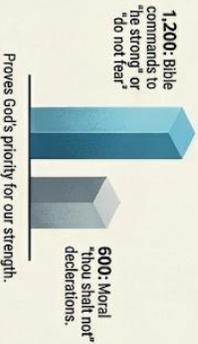


Having vs. Experiencing
Like a house with wiring but no electricity, a believer can be indwelt by the Spirit but lack "inner strength" for life's storms.



Inner vs. Outer Strength
Spiritual empowerment that remains even when circumstances are hard.

1,200 vs. 600



PILLAR 2 — EXPERIENCE (The Relationship)

The Fireplace Metaphor
Drawing close to God is like moving a couch next to a fireplace during a power outage: the closer you get, the more warmth you receive.



Roots Grow Down Into Love
Ephesians 3:17 notes that as we trust, our roots grow into God's love, which is "too great to understand fully" but must be felt.

PILLAR 1 — UNDERSTANDING (The Knowledge)



Hearing the Spirit Through Scripture
To hear the Spirit's whisper, one must be in the Word: silence and Scripture are where the Spirit speaks.



Togetherness (Community)

Like an ember in a fire, we stay glowing and hot when surrounded by other believers; pulled away, we quickly grow cold.



Obedience (Submission)

Paul describes "falling to his knees"—a posture of surrender. You cannot run away from God while on your knees.

FOUR PATHWAYS TO DRAW CLOSE



The Prayer Rhythm: Read, Meditate, Pray
Use Tim Keller's method: Read the Word, wrestle with it in thought, and use those thoughts to fuel conversation with God.



The Love of Christ

Focus on Christ's character, His sacrifice on the cross, and the fact that He knows your deepest secrets yet still says, "I love you."



Guidance
(leading the way)



Conviction
(pulling us back from cliffs)



Hopefulness
(possible when it seems impossible)



Endurance
(fueling us when the tank is empty).

THE RESULT



According to Ephesians 3:20, God is able to accomplish infinitely more than we might ask or think through His mighty power at work within us.