

Message

TOGETHER IN JESUS CHRIST

AUGUST 2/3, 2014 | PASTOR MATT ERICKSON | ACTS 2:1-41; EPHESIANS 2:1-22

"You are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God's people and also members of his household, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone." (Ephesians 2:19-20)

Grasping the Truth from the Outside In

- We are God's dwelling by God's Spirit (Ephesians 2:20-22)
- We are God's people in God's household (Ephesians 2:19-20)
- We are God's new humanity (Ephesians 2:14-18)
- We are brought near and welcomed (Ephesians 2:11-13)
- We are God's artistry (Ephesians 2:8-11)
- We are rescued and lavished with glorious grace (Ephesians 2:5-8)
- We are alive in God (Ephesians 2:1-5)

Together with Jesus at the Center

- Jesus at the center of the message (Acts 2:36)
- Jesus at the center of our salvation (Ephesians 2:1-8, 11-13)
- Jesus at the center of our daily living (Ephesians 2:8-11)
- Jesus at the center of our peace, ending hostility (Ephesians 2:14-18)
- Jesus at the center of our belonging and citizenship (Ephesians 2:19-20)
- Jesus at the center of our community (Ephesians 2:20-22)

Study Guide

1. When did you enter real, life-changing relationship with God through Jesus Christ? What happened? How did your life change?
2. This week we begin a four-week series entitled "Together" focused on what it means to be God's people together. This week, we will spend time in Ephesians, chapter 2. Stop and ask God to speak to you. Next, read Ephesians 2 out loud.
3. The first ten verses of this chapter outline the basics of what salvation in Jesus Christ is all about. 'Salvation' is a churchy word that we don't necessarily use a lot in our everyday lives. Ponder Paul's words here and then put them into your own words. How would you describe what the message of Jesus is about as outlined in Ephesians 2:1-10?
4. Reflect for a moment on what this really means. Do you believe this truth or not? Do you order your life by this truth or not? If yes, then why? If no, then why not?
5. The next twelve verses focus more about the change of status and relationship that we experience because of what Jesus has done. Remember that the Hebrew Bible makes a distinction between Jews (that specific national-ethnic group called into relationship with God through His promises) and Gentiles (the non-Jewish nations). Paul is writing to a mostly Gentile audience in Ephesians. Why would Paul's words here be significant to these readers?
6. What do you think it means that Jesus "himself is our peace" (Ephesians 2:14)? Why is this important?
7. The tabernacle—and, later, the temple—was the physical dwelling place of God in the Old Testament. How does Paul shift the idea of God's dwelling place in verses 20-22? What is he really saying here? What might this mean for us today?
8. What is one specific truth or point of application that God is speaking to you through this study, and how will you live that out this week? Write it down. If you are in a small group, share your thoughts with one another.