

"THE CHURCH: A MULTI-ETHNIC, KINGDOM-ORIENTED COMMUNITY"

THE MULTI-EVERYTHING CHURCH | EPHESIANS 2:11-22; REVELATION 7:9-10; PHILIPPIANS 1:27; 3:20;
JEREMIAH 29:4-7 | SEPTEMBER 8/9, 2018 | PASTOR MATT ERICKSON

*"In Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith . . .
There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female,
for you are all one in Christ Jesus." (Galatians 3:26, 28)*

What is the Church?: Two Truths and Two Traits

Two truths: A community created in Jesus . . . and becoming more like Jesus

(1 Corinthians 1:2; Ephesians 4:11-16)

Two traits: A community created in unity . . . and loving our way into unity

(John 17:20-21; 13:34-35)

The Church: A Multi-Ethnic Community (Ephesians 2:11-22; Revelation 7:9-10)

The new community walls broken-down through Christ

The new community of ever-expanding embrace in Christ

The Church: A Kingdom-Oriented Community (Philippians 1:27; 3:20; Jeremiah 29:4-7)

Living in Christ as citizens of a heavenly kingdom

Living in exile for the good of our earthly habitation

STUDY GUIDE:

1. If you could define the word 'church' in your own words, what would you say?
2. These first two weeks of September we are exploring at what it means to be the church. This week we focus on the church as a multi-ethnic, kingdom-oriented community in Christ. Ask God to speak to you and then continue with the study.
3. Read Ephesians 2:1-22 aloud. What does this part of Ephesians tell you about how the gospel of Jesus Christ ties into the nature of and relationships within the church? What did Jesus do in terms of salvation (2:1-10) and what did He do in terms of relationships (2:11-22)?
4. Revelation 7:9-10 is one of our theme Scriptures as a church. Read it aloud and, in light of Ephesians 2, what do you think this tells us about the multi-ethnic church?
5. If Christ has created a multi-ethnic community, what would you say is our role, if any, in cultivating a multi-ethnic community?
6. Read the following passages and reflect on what they tell us about the nature of our citizenship in heaven as God's people: Matthew 3:2; Philippians 3:20; Hebrews 11:9-16; Hebrews 13:14; Ephesians 2:19.
7. Now read Jeremiah 29:4-7. Here, Jeremiah gives instructions to the Jewish exiles living in the midst of Babylon on how they are to live. What do you think this speaks to the contemporary church about how we are to live?
8. What is one specific thing that God is speaking to you through this study? If you are with a small group, discuss that with one another and pray for one another. If you are studying on your own, write it down and share it with someone.

TAKE IT FURTHER:

- Read through the book of Acts in the New Testament and consider some of the main themes with The Bible Project's two-part video series on it found here: <https://thebibleproject.com/explore/acts/>.
- Read a book about the nature of the church, like Tim Keller's *Center Church: Doing Balanced, Gospel-Centered Ministry in Your City* or Edmund Clowney's *The Church*.
- Read a book about the history of the church, like Justo Gonzalez's *The Story of Christianity* or Bruce Shelley's *Church History in Plain Language*.