

EPHESIANS 2:11-22

GETTING STARTED...

Have you ever gone to church in another country? It is amazing to see the differences that exist within the Christian church around the world, and equally amazing to see the similarities. You can travel thousands of kms around the world and find brothers and sisters in Christ. The church is unlike any other organization because it crosses boundaries, barriers, and even breaks down hostilities that exist elsewhere. And that is exactly the point of the gospel message of Jesus. When Jesus died for our sins, he not only brought us as individuals to God, he brought us together as his family. Therefore, the divisions that exist to separate people are broken down in the gospel. This peace we have with God and with one another is what makes the church so unique in all the earth. The church exists as a physical example of God's grace for all to see!

READ THE TEXT: EPHESIANS 2:11-22

¹¹ Therefore remember that at one time you Gentiles in the flesh, called "the uncircumcision" by what is called the circumcision, which is made in the flesh by hands— ¹² remember that you were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. ¹³ But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. ¹⁴ For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility ¹⁵ by abolishing the law of commandments expressed in ordinances, that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace, ¹⁶ and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby killing the hostility. ¹⁷ And he came and preached peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near. ¹⁸ For through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father. ¹⁹ So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, ²⁰ built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, ²¹ in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. ²² In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.

UNDERSTANDING THE WORD

1. From this passage, how does Jesus make peace between Jews and Gentiles? How does Paul describe the peace we have? What metaphors does he use?
2. Describe the church from this passage. How should we understand what makes a group of people a church? How should we understand the purpose of the church?

REFLECTING ON THE SERMON

3. What was the main point of the sermon?
4. What has God been impressing on your heart from the sermon?

APPLYING THE POINT

5. How do we put this into practice?

Agassiz Have you been reconciled to God through Christ? How did that happen? Do you have "irreconcilable differences" with someone? How can you be reconciled to them?

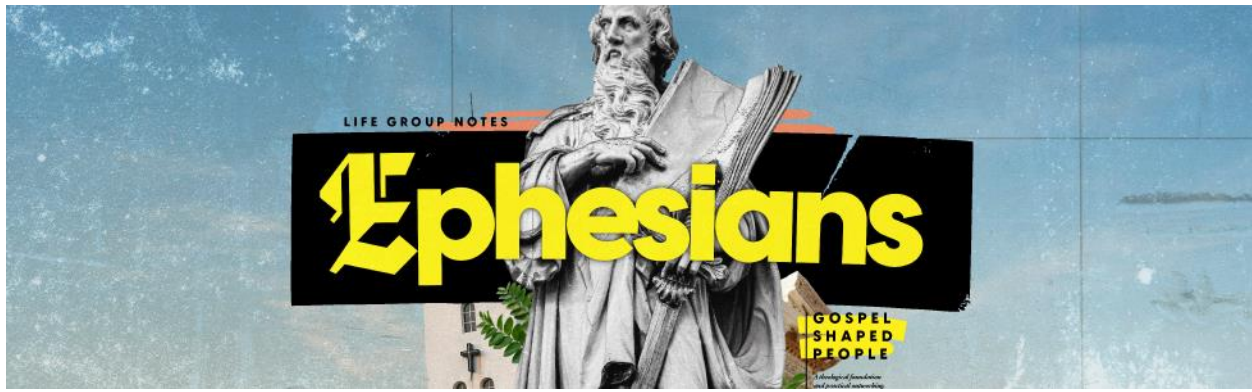
Chilliwack Have you reflected on how separate and hopeless you were prior to your life with Christ? Is that a part of your testimony when you explain it to others? Does peace with God have a tangible impact on your day to day life? How does the peace we have with God inform our relationships (both good and challenging)?

Harrison/Lake Errock Individualism is a pervasive character trait of our North American culture that has at times crept into the local church in some unhelpful ways. Are there ways in which you have emphasized the personal aspect of Christ's work on the cross in your life to the detriment of God's intended corporate effects of salvation for the wider body?

Promontory Is there a "wall of hostility" or divisive barrier between you and another believer? If so, how do you think Jesus could bring reconciliation in that situation? What does it practically mean to you that Christ is the cornerstone?

PRAYING & SHARING

1. How can you share what you have learned with... another believer? An unbeliever?
2. Share and pray for one another in your life group. How can you specifically pray for and encourage one another in response to this text?



How to Use this Guide

This guide is intended to help facilitate Central Life Groups as they meet to understand the Bible passage, discuss the sermon, and how to put it into practice in our lives. What is contained in this guide is not an exhaustive text analysis nor a full list of questions that can or should be asked during Life Group. This is simply a guide to help **start conversations that are centered on the Word of God.**

The Life Group Guide is separated into three main sections that are arranged with an intentional order: *Understanding the Word*, *Reflecting on the Sermon*, and *Applying the Point*. We want to first understand the Word of God, and then check that understanding by what has been preached, and then discuss how to put it into practice in our own lives. The order is intended to imitate the process of how the Word of God makes changes in our lives. Head, heart, hands, and all of it wrapped in prayer.

While the meaning of a text doesn't change, the way that we are called to apply it may look different from campus to campus, and even person to person. To reflect this distinction, you will see application questions from each campus in this guide.

Start with the question(s) from your campus and then look at others to see if they are helpful for your group. You may be surprised how similar or different they end up being and how the diversity brings a fuller understanding to how we can apply the Word of God.

Our goal is not that you answer every question in this guide, but that you are able to discuss the Word of God in a way **that helps everyone follow Jesus together!**

*“Great are the works of the LORD,
studied by all who delight in them.” - Psalm 111:2*