

Ephesians 2:11-22

EPHESIANS GC DISCUSSION GUIDE

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One New People in Christ

Big Idea

Through the cross, Jesus not only reconciles sinners to God but also reconciles believers to one another. Christ has broken down every barrier and created one new people united in Him.

Main Theme

The gospel creates a new humanity where former divisions are overcome through our shared identity in Christ.

Opening Icebreaker

What are some things that naturally divide people today?

Examples:

- Politics
- Race
- Culture
- Nationality
- Economics
- Generations

Transition: The greatest division in the first-century world was between Jews and Gentiles. Paul explains how Jesus destroyed that dividing wall through the cross.

Discussion Questions

1. Why does Paul begin by telling Gentile believers to "remember" their former condition (vv.11–12)?

Leader Notes: Christians should never forget where God found them.

Remembering our lostness fuels gratitude and humility.

2. How does Paul describe the Gentiles' condition before Christ in verse 12?

Leader Notes:Notice five descriptions:

- Separate from Christ
- Alienated from Israel
- Strangers to the covenants
- Without hope
- Without God

This is one of the bleakest descriptions of life apart from Christ.

3. What changed according to verse 13?

Leader Notes:"But now in Christ Jesus..."

Another great gospel turning point.

Those who were far away have been brought near by Christ's blood.

4. What does it mean that Jesus Himself is our peace (vv.14–15)?

Leader Notes:Jesus doesn't merely give peace.

Jesus is peace.

Peace is found in a person before it is experienced as a feeling.

5. What dividing walls exist in our culture today that the gospel addresses?

Leader Notes:Discuss:

- Race
- Politics
- Class
- Generational divides
- Personal conflicts

The gospel creates a deeper unity than any earthly identity.

6. What did Christ accomplish through His death according to verses 15–16?

Leader Notes:Christ:

- Created one new humanity
- Reconciled both groups to God
- Killed hostility

The cross deals with both vertical and horizontal brokenness.

7. Why is reconciliation with God the foundation for reconciliation with others?

Leader Notes: People cannot experience lasting unity apart from the gospel. The vertical relationship shapes horizontal relationships.

8. According to verses 17–18, what privilege do all believers now share?

Leader Notes: All believers have equal access to the Father through Christ by the Spirit. Notice the Trinitarian emphasis:

- Through Christ
- By one Spirit
- To the Father

9. What images does Paul use in verses 19–22 to describe the church?

Leader Notes: Three major images:

- Citizens of God's kingdom
- Members of God's household
- Stones in God's temple

Each emphasizes belonging and unity.

10. Which image resonates most with you personally and why?

Leader Notes: Allow personal reflection.

Many people connect deeply with:

- Family (household)
- Purpose (temple)
- Identity (citizenship)

11. What does it mean for Christ to be the cornerstone of God's household?

Leader Notes: The cornerstone determines the alignment and stability of the entire building.

Everything in the church must be built around Christ.

12. How can our small group better reflect the unity and reconciliation Paul describes here?

Leader Notes: Encourage specific applications:

- Hospitality
- Bearing burdens

- Forgiveness
- Listening well
- Pursuing relationships across differences
- Welcoming outsiders

Digging Deeper

Look again at the movement of the passage:

Formerly:

- Far away
- Strangers
- Alienated
- Without hope

Now:

- Brought near
- Citizens
- Family members
- God's dwelling place

How does that transformation encourage you?

Gospel Connection

The cross accomplishes two reconciliations:

Vertical Reconciliation

Sinners are brought near to God.

Horizontal Reconciliation

Believers are brought near to one another.

The church is a living display of God's reconciling grace.

Prayer Focus

Pray for:

- Greater unity within the church
- Humility and gratitude
- Reconciliation in strained relationships
- Love across differences
- A deeper appreciation for what Christ accomplished through the cross

Closing Challenge: This week, look for one opportunity to intentionally move toward someone in the church whom you might naturally overlook. Live out the unity that Christ

has already purchased.