

# WHO AM I?

## “ONE IN CHRIST”

Community Group Curriculum for the week of November 9, 2014

### Big Picture

In Christ Jews and Gentiles were reconciled. However, there remained some disunity in the Ephesian church – primarily between Jewish and Gentile believers. In our passage Paul reminds them that God's plan for the church's unity is through reconciliation through Christ's death on the cross. The cross is God's answer to any feud, discord, or alienation. It established peace in all who believe. No one who comes to God through Jesus will be excluded (Romans 10:12-13). Amen and amen!

### Let's Explore Together

1. Read the entire passage of Ephesians 2:11-22. In your group have someone describe in their own words what was just read. As a group address these questions:
  - What new thing did you discover in this passage that you did not know before?
  - What did you learn about God? About Jesus?
  - What most impacted you about this passage?
  - What can you use from what you learned in this discussion in your life today?
2. Read Ephesians 2:11-12. In the first ten verses of Ephesians 2, Paul discussed the salvation of sinners in general, but now turns to the work of Christ for Gentiles in particular. Most of the converts in the Ephesian church were Gentiles and they knew that much of God's program in the Old Testament involved the Jews. For centuries the Jews (through circumcision) looked down on the Gentiles (uncircumcised). The one word that best describes the Gentiles is *without*. List five (5) things from verses 11-12 that the Gentiles were without:
  - a)
  - b)
  - c)
  - d)
  - e)
3. Now read Ephesians 2:13. What gives the Gentiles hope in verse 13? What does it mean to be “in Christ Jesus”? Does John 10:16 refer to Jews only or to all? Explain.
4. Read Ephesians 2:14-17. How did Christ forge the reconciliation of Jews and Gentiles? What premise or idea do the following passages have in common (Isaiah 9:6; Luke 2:14; John 14:27, 20:19, 21 and Ephesians 2:14)?

5. Read Ephesians 2:17-18. How do these verses demonstrate the highest and fullest level of peacemaking? Look again at verse 18 and say the verse in your own words. What is revealed in this one short verse?
  
6. Read Ephesians 2:19-22. What is the cornerstone of a building and why would Christ Jesus be the cornerstone? Why would Paul say the apostles and prophets are the foundation? The followers of Christ are which part of the building? Note the switch from past tense to present tense when describing the whole building. Why is that significant?
  
7. What are some practical ways we can reach out to Christians who differ from us?

### **Prayer**

Think about a broken relationship in your life. Ask God to help you become more compassionate and understanding toward that person. Ask God to break down the walls that separate you and to eliminate the source of quarrels and conflicts between you. How can you have peace? Remind yourself that Christ lives in you. Ask God to help you look beyond cultural, social, racial, emotional, or other differences in fellow Christians so you too can worship God in the loving and peaceful manner He expects of you.

### **Final Thoughts**

God chose the Jews to be His special people (Amos 3:2). God's plan was that through the Jews everyone on earth would be blessed (Genesis 12:3). However, the Jews' disdain for the Gentiles prevented them from completing their calling. They didn't trust God and, sadly many Christians today fall in the same category. Christ came to reconcile us to God and to each other. As modern-day Christians we need to keep Christ's purpose for us in the forefront of our thoughts to be able to complete our calling here. God's plan is for all His people to be spiritually united with Christ through faith and love.

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From Outsiders to Insiders

**Matt Vorhees**

November 9, 2014

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**SCRIPTURE:** Ephesians 2:11-22

**EXPOSITION:**

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2. From \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ (2:14-18)

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