



Connect: LIFEgroup discussion guide

a Christian community of fresh hope

Paul says "You are in Christ"

Sun 6th Nov 2022

WELCOME: *Prayer has been an important part of our focus in the past 3 weeks.*

- Why should prayer be an important part of our gatherings?
- How could each of us develop our prayer life more effectively and how could we do it together at other times?

LAST WEEK'S MESSAGE: Ephesians CHAPTER 1

- What are your key reflections from Ephesians 1 last week?
- What does it mean to you to be "in Christ?"
- In what ways does Paul's teaching include the idea of the "Trinity?"
- What does it mean to you to know that we are to know that we are each CHOSEN, FREE, FORGIVEN, KNOWN BY GOD, HEIRS TO EVERY SPIRITUAL BLESSING, PEOPLE OF HOPE, SPIRIT-FILLED PEOPLE?
- In what ways is Paul's teaching about being "in Christ" reflected in his calling for believers to respond in prayer?

Q. Have you ever travelled in the wrong direction, unaware you were going the wrong way?

READ: Eph 2:1-3

- How would you sum up these verses in your own words?
- What kind of thoughts does it raise for you about people you know, who don't have a relationship with God at present?
- Concepts of "the devil" are played down by our culture – what do you think of the idea that "The greatest trick the Devil ever pulled was convincing the world he didn't exist."

READ: Eph 2:4-8

This section begins with the words "But God..." So often people have been heading in a wrong direction but God has intervened to bring about change in their lives.

- When has God intervened in your life?
- What do you think Paul means when he writes that God "gave us life when he raised Christ from the dead?"
- Check out some different versions of Eph 2:8 – read it out aloud several times?

READ: Eph 2:9-10

At one level there seems to be a contradiction here – salvation is NOT a reward for good deeds, yet God has planned good things for us to do

- What does it mean to you that salvation is not a reward for something that we have done?
- What do you think are the, "good things he planned for us long ago?"
- How can we figure out what are the specific things God has planned for us?

READ: Eph 2:11-14

- In what ways do you think this teaching, of unity and peace between Jewish and Gentile believers, would have been a significant teaching in the early church?
- What does this suggest about diversity on the church today?
- What does it mean to be a “peacemaker?”

READ: Eph 2:15-18

- What does it mean that Jesus ended “the system of the law?”
- How would you describe the “Good News of peace” that Jesus has brought?
- What can stop people from coming to God?

READ: Eph 2:19-20

Oikos (in verse 20) in the Greek New Testament includes “all of the inhabitants of a house, all the persons forming one family, a household the family of God, of the Christian Church.” As Christians our own “Oikos” is our relational world,” the group of people that God has strategically placed in our lives, that we may proclaim Jesus to those who don't know Him and make disciples of those who do.”

- How would you sum up these verses?
- What does this say about the meaning of local church to the New Testament Christians?
- What does it say to us about how the church should be today?

READ: Eph 2: 21-22

- What is the significance here of being “joined together?”
- What does it mean to you that together we are “becoming a holy temple,” “being made part of this dwelling where God lives by his Spirit?”
- How should this impact us when we gather, how do you think we should respond?

Pray together:

Take time as a LIFEgroup to pray for one another and pray for our church family to be empowered by the Holy Spirit to know who we are and to passionately praise and glorify God. Pray that we can learn to be a people of who are alive in Christ and who reflect the life of Christ in our church, LIFEgroup and in our wider community. Pray that we would live with gratitude for our salvation and for our leaders to discern what it is that God has planned for us and for Connect Church to walk into those things in 2023. Pray for unity and peace in our church and in our influence in the churches in our community. Pray that Connect Church would be a people whose lives are marked by being a people who come to the Father through the Son in the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen