

Pastor Lance Ainsworth

MESSAGE NOTES

Thursday, January 11 Sunday, January 14

Ephesians 2:11-19

11Therefore remember that formerly you, the Gentiles in the flesh, who are called "Uncircumcision" by the so-called "Circumcision," which is performed in the flesh by human hands 12remember that you were at that time separate from Christ, excluded from the common wealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. 13But now in Christ Jesus you who formerly were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.

We were out and brought in.

14For He Himself is our peace, who made both groups into one and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall, 15by abolishing in His flesh the enmity, which is the Law of commandments contained in ordinances, so that in Himself He might make the two into one new man, thus establishing peace, 16and might reconcile them both in one body to God through the cross, by it having put to death the enmity.

We were separated but are now integrated.

17And He came and preached peace to you who were far away, and peace to those who were near; 18for through Him we both have out access in one Spirit to the Father. 19So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God's household.

We were foreigners but are now family.

God's family is diverse. (Rev. 5:9) God's family is unified. (Eph. 2:14) God's family is committed to growth. (PSa. 145:4) God's family is generous. (Gal. 6:10)

The church is not something we go to, it's a family we belong to.

ONE SERIES- Family January 11 & 14, 2024 Pastor Lance Ainsworth

Prayer Requests:

Group Discussion: What is your fondest memory with family?

Read aloud: Ephesians 2:11-19

1. Ephesians 2:11 "Therefore remember that formerly you, the Gentiles in the flesh, who are called "Uncircumcision" by the so-called "Circumcision," The Jews considered themselves better than all other peoples and nations. God's plan was for the Jews to live a lifestyle of worship to God that was to influence all people to worship the God of Israel. Do Christians face this same dilemma? Does our worship of God draw people closer to God or puff us up?

2. Ephesians 2:14 "For He Himself is our peace, who made both groups into one and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall," Christ is the great unifier of all people groups. Read Revelation 5:9. Do you see diversity as a strength of the church? How can we be more unified? What walls has Christ broken down for us to be unified with different people groups in today's culture? What walls have we kept up?

3. Ephesians 2:19 "So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God's household" How do you view church? How does viewing the church as a family change our attitudes? I gave four marks to the family of God: unified, diverse, committed to growth, and generous. Are there any attributes you would add to that list?

4. "They call it radical individualism. What this amounts to is simple enough. We in America have been socialized to believe that our own dreams, goals, and personal fulfillment ought to take precedence over the well-being of any group—our church or our family, for example—to which we belong. The immediate needs of the individual are more important than the long-term health of the group. So we leave and withdraw, rather than stay and grow up, when the going gets rough in the church or in the home." – Joseph Hellerman. Do you agree with the above statement? Why or why not?