

In Christ, I Belong

Series: Made for More (Ephesians)

May 15, 2022 - Brad Bailey

Intro

If someone asks you ... who are you? As strange as it may sound... it can be hard to answer. And among the most common sources of how we answer...will often relate to what we belong to.

Identity is rooted in what we belong to.

Identity is rooted in belonging...and in what we belong to.

There is nothing more fundamental than belonging.

Without it...an infant will die... without belonging...the human soul will never develop.

More deeply than we realize... we long to belong...and we fear being excluded. [1]

We may have felt a twinge at various times in life.

- As an adolescent boy we didn't get picked for the team.
- A teenage girl is shunned by those she had thought were her friends.
- The romantic love that turns away...in silence.
- One gets "terminated" from their work place community... and it brings a wall of isolation.

All of these are reflections of the pain of being excluded. Luckily they are generally just temporary and we can navigate our way through them. But they are only hints at the ultimate exclusion.

And if we dare to face it... there is no deeper pain than exclusion from God.

So the ultimate question... is...

Do you belong with God?

This is what God speaks to us about today through the next portion of our text.... As we continue in our series ...Made for More... engaging what God says to us from the Biblical Book of Ephesians...

The Apostle Paul... is speaking of what God has done through Christ.

What Christ makes of us. We were made for more than we have ever imagined our grasped.

It's a call to really know who we are.

To appreciate the context... it's important to know that **Paul is writing** to those who were **primarily Gentiles**. Gentiles refers to those who were **not part of the Jewish people**. The Bible testifies to how God called out a people to become his own... through whom he would make Himself known... beginning with a man named Abraham. His descendents became the Jewish people...the nation of Israel... and all others were Gentiles. They were looked at as outsiders to the living God.

We begin in Ephesians 2:11...

Ephesians 2:11-12 (NLT)

Don't forget that you Gentiles used to be outsiders. You were called "uncircumcised heathens" by the Jews, who were proud of their circumcision, even though it affected only their bodies and not their hearts. ¹² In those days you were living apart from Christ. You were excluded from citizenship among the people of Israel, and you did not know the covenant promises God had made to them. You lived in this world without God and without hope.

To understand who you are...you **need to understand what you were** and the significance of what has changed.

So Paul begins, "Don't forget that you Gentiles used to be outsiders."

He is saying... realize how **utterly excluded** you were... how you **were hopelessly separated** from God... the **reality of being left outside**.

It may be hard to feel the weight of those words. The majority of us here are likely Gentiles...and it's **hard to identify with being "outsiders"** among **those gathering to worship God**.

We have put ourselves in the position that existed before the coming of Christ. We were not a part of God's people.

"You were called "uncircumcised heathens" by the Jews, who were proud of their circumcision, even though it affected only their bodies and not their hearts."

Circumcision was given to **mark those who were part of God's people**... who were set apart by God. They were to live as those set apart... **by the laws that reflected what humanity** was to be. These laws reflected human dignity... **distinct from the ways that were unclean**... distinct from the tragic ways of the Gentiles. [2]

Being called "uncircumcised heathens" may not be common in the **schoolyard of rivalries today**... but then it **meant you didn't belong to God**.

And this is what Paul reminded them of, as he now expounds to note what they were without. He notes they were:

Without Christ. ("apart from Christ") Christ was the long awaited Messiah... who God had promised he would send to save the people. He came to the Jews...and at one time... the Gentiles seemed to have no part in God's plan...and no means to God.

Without citizenship. God called the Jews and built them into a nation. A Gentile could enter the nation as a **proselyte**, but **they were never seen as the same as true citizens**. They were always **second class**...outsiders. The Gentiles were referred to as **"aliens"** and **"strangers"**— and never allowed to forget it. Many **immigrants** have **felt that way in the United States**. Even when their families have lived here for generations. For a Gentile it was far more than this. They could never become true citizen... never truly a part of the people.

Without a covenant with God. God had made a covenant with Abraham... and his descendants. And though it spoke of blessing all nations through them... that had yet to become a reality. So a Gentile was just left outside the promise.

Without God. The heathen had plenty of man-made gods. But the pagan, no matter how religious or moral he might have been, they didn't belong to the true and living God. [3]

Without hope. Historians tell us that during this time in history...there was a cloud of hopelessness across the ancient world. Philosophies were empty; traditions were disappearing; religions were powerless to help men face either life or death. People longed to pierce the veil and get some message of hope from the other side, but there was none (1 Thes. 4:13–18).

All of this was **captured** in the very real **walls that surrounded the temple**. [4]

There was a **wall in the Jewish temple**, separating the **court of the Gentiles** from the rest of the temple areas. Imagine...life surround the temple...the place where God has made a place to dwell...and you see the people enter that space....but there is a wall that you cannot enter.

Archeologists have discovered the actual signs posted on the outer walls of the temple... and it reads like this:

"No foreigner may enter within the barricade which surrounds the sanctuary and enclosure. Anyone who is caught doing so will have himself to blame for his ensuing death." – Inscribed on the wall of the Temple

Both Greek and Latin inscriptions on the temple served as warnings to pagan visitors not to proceed under penalty of death. They were separated from God and his people. Excluded. Outside.

This was **captured** in the **first term for understanding the destiny of spiritual separation... Ghehena**. As people began to ponder what spiritual separation from God meant...the first term for hell was Ghehena... which referred to the trash heaps outside the city walls... where the refuse would burn. Those outside the covenant were **destined for destruction**.

So Paul begins, "Don't forget that you Gentiles used to be outsiders." You didn't belong to God's nation, God's people, or God Himself.

So lets listen to what the text next declares...

Ephesians 2:13-18 (NLT)

But now you have been united with Christ Jesus. Once you were far away from God, but now you have been brought near to him through the blood of Christ.. ¹⁴ For Christ himself has brought peace to us. **He united Jews and Gentiles into one people when, in his own body on the cross, he broke down the wall of hostility that separated us.** ¹⁵ **He did this by ending the system of law with its commandments and regulations. He made peace between Jews and Gentiles by creating in himself one new people from the two groups.** ¹⁶ **Together as one body, Christ reconciled both groups to God by means of his death on the cross, and our hostility toward each other was put to death.** ¹⁷ **He brought this Good News of peace to you Gentiles who were far away from him, and peace to the Jews who were near.** ¹⁸ **Now all of us can come to the Father through the same Holy Spirit because of what Christ has done for us.**

After Paul captures our **sheer hopelessness**... our exclusion from any hope... he begins with **the word** that should **pierce our souls** with hope...it is **the word "but."**

Yes it's a big but... maybe the biggest but we'll ever encounter.

No... not that which is spelled with two "ts"...but the one with one "t"... that which introduces that which speaks of change and contrast. When you have been given what seems utterly hopeless...you wait for this word... "But."

Verse 13 he begins... ***"But now you have been united with Christ Jesus."***

"...you were far away from God, but now you have been brought near to him

Now you have been **brought near... not just allowed to slip in the doorway...but able to come near.** [6]

How is this possible?

Through a new covenant that God would make possible.

Paul could see the what God had always been doing.

Like all the religious leaders and lives... he had been trying to claim a righteousness... he didn't have. It was a righteousness that claimed he wasn't like the Gentiles... but he was.

Many of the Pharisees would pray daily, "O God, I give thanks that I am a Jew, not a Gentile."

The way of God had always been that through Abraham.... God would bless all people...all nations. But human nature has a way of fashioning religion from a means of blessing into a means of cursing.

But God had long spoken about what was to come... about a new covenant. God had declared long before through the prophet Jeremiah...

"Behold, the days are coming," says the Lord, "when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah--not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, though I was a husband to them," says the Lord" - Jeremiah 31:31-32

And this covenant he came to bring to those he had called to himself...to the Jewish people... but it would ultimately be for all people who received it.

As Paul writes in the Biblical Book of Romans... God had said that He would create a new people.

Romans 9:25-26

As he says in Hosea:

**"I will call them 'my people' who are not my people;
and I will call her 'my loved one' who is not my loved one,"
and, "In the very place where it was said to them,
'You are not my people,' there they will be called 'children of the living God.'"**

As Paul alludes to in our text... the covenant based on the Law was over...it had led to the covenant based on God's mercy...

The Law revealed that humanity could not save itself... we could not be reconciled with God based on our goodness... on our glory.

It leads to God providing the way of His mercy... and the way of surrender of the heart.

In Christ God bears our consequences...and gives us his "rightness"...his righteousness.

What the means?

The blood of Christ. That blood represents the mercy of God... the love of God.

Before his crucifixion... Jesus prayed for the unity of those united in him. ... he prayed **knowing that His work of the cross would accomplish the answer**, and a prayer He was willing to pray knowing that His agony would be used to answer.

And this new covenant destroyed the distinction between Jew and Gentile.

The new covenant ... unites everyone in himself.

He united Jews and Gentiles into one people when, in his own body on the cross, he broke down the wall of hostility that separated us. He did this by ending the system of law..." Ephesians 2:14-15 (NLT)

When He died, the veil in the temple was literally torn in two, and the wall of separation (figuratively) was torn down.

So now,

Romans 10:12-13

"...there is no difference between Jew and Gentile--the same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on him, for, "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."

Common ground?

Calling on God to save us. We could say that **our most fundamental** start to identity begins with being **sinner**s. In fact, if you could tell someone anything about you... I don't think anything will open up more connection than choosing to identify yourself as a sinner.

It's become common today for people to express that **Christianity is too "exclusive."** In our current culture... we have **longed for everyone to be included...and accepted...** that **nothing should be judged.** So the idea of any one God or belief or truth is a problem.

But the truth is that people do judge people...and exclude people. Few would say that Hitler shouldn't be judged... or that if there is a judgement between good and evil...that he should be accepted into the good side.

The truth is that the world continues to divide the world between good and bad people...and suggest that people who are good would be included and people who are bad should not be excluded. And if we were to explore this more...who is good and bad is defined by the person who is suggesting this. It's simply another form of exclusion. Or perhaps people feel that everyone should be made to enter God reign. But that implies people who don't want to be. And that raises some problems.

The Scriptures tell us that **"everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."** (Romans 10:13). Every who calls out...everyone who **recognizes that they have turned away from God...**and are willing to turn back...and seek his grace. It welcomes all who know that they are sinners... that they **have been hiding from God...** and are **willing to come out of hiding and come home.**

And this new covenant unites Jew and Gentile... into one new humanity.
This grace forms a **"new people"...**a new humanity.

God says "he... united Jews and Gentiles **into one people** ...and was **creating in himself one new people** from the two groups.

This new humanity...this **"one new people"** is the body of Christ... the church.

It redefines the whole nature of belonging.

One cannot identify with the new humanity based on anything but the common grace of our common Father.

It was HARD for them...and it's hard for us.

We've spent our whole lives **finding our identity in other groups we belong to...** other reference points.

At the **high school lunch table...** at one table you'll see the **jocks**, the **artists...**the **academics...**the **list goes on.**

We have learned what it means to belong to and find identity in being white, black, Hispanic, Asian...more than children of God.

We have learned what it means to belong to and find identity in being male and female... Democrats and Republicans.... Americans.

The true nature of the church redefines what it means to belong.

...Lets look at the **final verses** in this section,

Ephesians 2:19-22 (NLT)

So now you Gentiles are no longer strangers and foreigners. You are citizens along with all of God's holy people. You are members of God's family.²⁰ Together, we are his house, built on the foundation of the apostles and the prophets. And the cornerstone is Christ Jesus himself.²¹ We are carefully joined together in him, becoming a holy temple for the Lord.²² Through him you Gentiles are also being made part of this dwelling where God lives by his Spirit.

This section begins, "So now..." He has described what we were... what God has done...and now it time to declare who we are. He describes our

Unification...and what it means to belong together to the New Humanity

In the closing verses of this chapter, Paul gives three ways that capture our new humanity... our unity.

In Christ...

We are Citizens of One Kingdom (v. 19a).

Paul says those who were outside are "no longer strangers and foreigners. You are citizens along with all of God's holy people." (v. 19)

Imagine never being a citizen....never having a sense of national identity... never belonging. Paul says..."You've **just been made a citizen.**" And he says to you..."**you've just been given your citizenship**...in the new and only nation of God... the only nation that will be lasting. [7]

> You **just got issued a passport. Check the expiration date. It says. "forever."**

And there are no second class citizens. No tiers in which some have greater rights than others.

Paul goes on..."**You are members of God's family.**"

We are Members of One New Family (v. 19b).

Not only are we fellow citizens of God's kingdom ... but members of God's family.

We are now members of a new family... of God's household.

We are all brothers and sisters in the one family, no matter what racial, national, or physical distinctions we may possess. [7b]

That may seem a little awkward...you hardly know all these people. Don't worry... Jesus knows that they're weird... but he knows that he will begin changing them... working out the dysfunctions.

What matters is that there is a seat at the table for you.

We are Parts of One New Dwelling (vv. 20–22).

Paul tells us **we are now God's house... a dwelling where God lives by his Spirit.** [8]

Such a dwelling is "built on the foundation of the apostles and the prophets"...which means **not on our own ideas** but on what is rooted in the work of God in history. And Paul says, "the **cornerstone** is Christ Jesus himself." The Cornerstone... was the **primary load-bearing stone** that determines how solid the building was going to be. (*One cornerstone that was uncovered in Palestine weighed 570 tons!*)

Every one of us who is united in Christ... is a part of this dwelling in which God's Spirit dwells.

As the Apostle Peter wrote...

"You are living stones that God is building into his spiritual temple." - 1 Peter 2:5 (NLT)

You not only have a place...but a fit.

CLOSING:

So let me ask you: **Do you belong?**

The question is **not** "Do you **feel** like you belong?"

The question is **not** "How much have you **experienced** belonging?"

The question is **more ultimate: Do you belong?**

> And the answer is that **in Christ....you belong.**

The entirety of the Scriptures shouts to the world that we belong to God. In the beginning, humanity was created to be in perfect union with God and belong to Him, for we are His creation (Genesis 1:26).

In Him we live and move and have our being. - Acts 17:28

It is he who made us, and we are his; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture. - Psalm 100:3

You belong with God...and you belong with others.

That is God's plan... and provision.

God's **plan** is that you belong. God's **provision** is for you to belong.

Belonging means we become more aware that we are here as a **"we" ...not just a "me."**

Communion > The NEW COVENANT

Christ said... whenever you come together... remember by body... blood... for it is that which gives you new life...and unites you in that life.

When you receive the element... which represents the body of Christ... we receive he who unites us as the new humanity.

I belong to God.

We belong to God.

Optional sections:

At this point could up a volunteer from each "side" of the gathering...joking they were representing **right siders and left siders**. Then spoke into them the previous three ways of now relating...

They shared a **new citizenship...passports that will never expire**... in a new nation...the Kingdom of God that will never end.

They **were family...and that meant learning to relate as brother / sister**.

They were part of a dwelling in which God's presence sought to have a place to be manifest.]

Through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father... In oriental courts there was a role (*prosagoges*) who brought a person into the presence of the king." It is that word which Paul uses to refer to the access which the Spirit now serves.

Part of embracing belonging...is **embracing others**. Others enjoy the same **access** to God, access that comes **by one Spirit to the Father**. Not only are Jews and Gentiles saved by the same gospel, but they also have the same essential walk with God and **access** to Him. One group does not have a greater **access** than the other does. [9]

Responsive Song - Belong to You - [Iron Bell Music // Belong To You \(Enemy Can't\) - Lyric Video \(Ft. Stephen McWhirter\)](#)

Resources: Wiersbe, W. W. (1996). *The Bible exposition commentary* (Eph 2:11–22) (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books) and Mark Driscoll 'Who Do You Think You Are?'

Notes

1. In recent years colleagues across UCLA, Purdue, and elsewhere found that social rejection activates many of the same brain regions involved in physical pain (Science, 2003).

Rejection can explode into aggression...as those analyzing the cases of school shooters found nearly all suffered from social rejection. From: The Pain Of Social Rejection By Kirsten Weir APA - April 2012, Vol 43, No. 4 - <http://www.apa.org/monitor/2012/04/rejection.aspx>

It's also been noted that today...these and so many other forms of rejection become more public. We watch shows like Survivor where someone gets kicked off the island...sort of an adult version of musical chairs...where someone has to be cut. Cyber bullying is more humiliating.

From - Is rejection on the rise? APA April 2012, Vol 43, No. 4

<http://www.apa.org/monitor/2012/04/rejection-rise.aspx>

Research Shows that Loneliness Is Deadly

According to an article in *Slate Magazine*, "Loneliness has doubled: 40 percent of adults in two recent surveys said they were lonely, up from 20 percent in the 1980s." Increased loneliness has led to the following serious health risks:

Studies of elderly people and social isolation concluded that those without adequate social interaction were twice as likely to die early.

The increased mortality risk [from loneliness] is comparable to that of smoking and twice as dangerous as obesity.

Social isolation impairs immune function and boosts inflammation, which can lead to arthritis, type II diabetes, and heart disease.

Loneliness is not just making us sick, it is killing us. But, sadly, as a culture we rarely talk about it. John T. Cacioppo, a researcher at the University of Chicago who studies the effects of loneliness, put it this way: "Admitting you are lonely is like holding a big L [for loser] on your forehead."

Jessica Olien, "*Loneliness Can Kill You. Don't Let It.*" *Slate Magazine*(8-23-13)

2. It is worth noting that the spiritual plight of the Gentiles was caused not by God but by their own willful sin. Paul said the Gentiles knew the true God but deliberately refused to honor Him (Rom. 1:18–23). Religious history is not a record of man starting with many gods (idolatry) and gradually discovering the one true God.

Rather, it is the sad story of man knowing the truth about God and deliberately turning away from it! It is a story of devolution, not evolution! The first eleven chapters of Genesis give the story of the decline of the Gentiles; and from Genesis 12 on (the call of Abraham), it is the story of the Jews. God separated the Jews from the Gentiles that He might be able to save the Gentiles also. "Salvation is of the Jews" (John 4:22).

3. The writer of Psalm 115 contrasted the true God with the idols of the heathen.

Ps 115:4-8, "But their idols are silver and gold, made by the hands of men. They have mouths, but cannot speak, eyes, but they cannot see; they have ears, but cannot hear, noses, but they cannot smell; they have hands, but cannot feel, feet, but they cannot walk; nor can they utter a sound with their throats. Those who make them will be like them, and so will all who trust in them."

4. Info on the inscription can be found [here](#) and [here \(The Times of Israel\)](#).

It was this wall that the Jews thought Paul and his Gentile friends crossed when the Jews attacked him in the temple and threatened to kill him (Acts 21:28–31).

John Stott notes:

The famous Jewish historian Josephus describes this barricade in both his books. In his **Antiquities** he writes that the temple was 'encompassed by a stone wall for a partition, with an inscription which forbade any foreigner to go in under pain of death'. In his **Wars of the Jews** he is a little more explicit. There was, he writes, 'a partition made of stone all round, whose height was three cubits. Its construction was very elegant; upon it stood pillars at equal distance from one another, declaring the law of purity, some in Greek and some in Roman letters, that "no foreigner should go within that sanctuary".'

During the last hundred years or so two of the Greek notices have been discovered, one on 1871 and the other in 1935. The former, exhibited in the museum in Istanbul, is a white limestone slab measuring nearly a metre across. Its exact wording is as follows: 'No foreigner may enter within the barrier and enclosure round the temple. Anyone who is caught doing so will have himself to blame for his ensuing death.' Paul knew all about it from personal experience. Only about three years previously he had nearly been lynched himself by an angry Jewish mob who thought he had taken a Gentile with him into the Temple, interestingly enough an Ephesian named Trophimus. (Acts 21:27-31).

From A Commentary by John Stott - [here](#)

5. Romans 9:1-5 (NIV)

I speak the truth in Christ--I am not lying, my conscience confirms it in the Holy Spirit-- ² I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart. ³ For I could wish that I myself were cursed and cut off from

Christ for the sake of my brothers, those of my own race, ⁴ the people of Israel. Theirs is the adoption as sons; theirs the divine glory, the covenants, the receiving of the law, the temple worship and the promises. ⁵ Theirs are the patriarchs, and from them is traced the human ancestry of Christ, who is God over all, forever praised! Amen.

6. Access by one Spirit to the Father. The Greek word *prosagoge*, translated “access,” is a technical term for the right of free approach into the presence of a king. In the Persian royal court, there was an official called the *prosagogeus* whose function was to introduce people who desired an audience with the king. The image is beautiful and the truth is clear: through Christ we have open access to the Father. On the Cross Jesus flung the door open—in fact, nailed it open so that it could never be closed again—the door into the presence of God. (From Preachers Commentary)

7. Wiersbe regarding a new "nation" of God.

Israel was God's chosen nation, but they rejected their Redeemer and suffered the consequences. The kingdom was taken from them and given to “a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof” (Matt. 21:43). This “new nation” is the church, “a chosen generation ... a holy nation, a peculiar people” (Ex. 19:6; 1 Peter 2:9). In the Old Testament, the nations were reckoned by their descent from Shem, Ham, or Japheth (Gen. 10). In the Book of Acts, we see these three families united in Christ. In Acts 8, a descendant of Ham is saved, the Ethiopian treasurer; in Acts 9, a descendant of Shem, Saul of Tarsus, who became Paul the apostle; and in Acts 10, the descendants of Japheth, the Gentiles in the household of the Roman soldier, Cornelius. Sin has divided mankind, but Christ unites by His Spirit. All believers, regardless of national background, belong to that “holy nation” with citizenship in heaven (Phil. 3:20–21). Wiersbe, W. W. (1996). *The Bible exposition commentary* (Eph 2:11–22). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

7b. Now for some of us...this may sound beautiful...but also a bit uncomfortable.

Maybe your experience with your biological family isn't something we really want more of.

Maybe family represents disappointment.

Maybe family represents responsibility... and some difficult expectations.

We need to realize that this new family is rooted in God. It is rooted in God's perfect love...in which dysfunctions can be restored... what is not healthy can be healed.

You see, that person you can't imagine as your brother or sister... well...they already are.

The question is ...what kind of brother or sister are you going to be?

8. Bible Knowledge Commentary re becoming the "dwelling of God"

Paul described the church as a great building, a holy temple in which God dwells. This figure of God dwelling in a temple comes from the Old Testament. Paul wrote of the building's foundation (v. 20), formation (v. 21), and function (v. 22).

2:20. Paul first described the foundation of the building. The reason Gentile believers are “fellow citizens” (v. 19) is that they are built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets. The “prophets” are of the New Testament era, not the Old Testament. “Prophets” follows the word “apostles” here and in 3:5 and 4:11. These men received the revelation of the mystery of the church in the present Age, which had been hidden in days past, that is, in Old Testament times (3:5).

The words could be translated, “the foundation which consists of the apostles and prophets.” This makes the best sense when one sees in 4:11 that the apostles and prophets were gifted men given to the church as its “foundation.” Furthermore, this fits well in the present context, which states that Christ Jesus Himself is the chief Cornerstone, that is, He is part of the foundation. In ancient building practices “the chief cornerstone” was carefully placed. It was crucial because the entire building was lined up with it. The church's foundation, that is, the apostles and prophets, needed to be correctly aligned with Christ. All other believers are built on that foundation, measuring their lives with Christ.

2:21. Paul then discussed the formation of the building. In Christ the whole building is joined together. The participle translated “is joined together” is *synarmologoumenē*, used only here and in 4:16. It denotes that the various parts of the building are skillfully fitted to each other, not haphazardly thrown together. This structure rises to become (lit., “continually grows [pres. tense] into”) a holy temple in the Lord. This

indicates that the church is a living and growing organism, as new believers are included in this temple's superstructure (cf. 4:15–16; 1 Peter 2:5). Both Jewish and Gentile believers are being "joined together" into this one organism labeled "a holy temple" (cf. "one new man" [Eph. 2:15] and "one body" [v. 16]). The word for temple (naos) always refers to the sanctuary within the physical structure in Jerusalem, not to the entire temple area with its open courts (hieron).

2:22. Paul now discussed the function of the temple. God places individual believers into the structure; thus it is being built together. The goal of this temple is to become a dwelling in which God lives by His Spirit. In the Old Testament God's glory was in the temple, which represented His presence with the people. In this Age God dwells in His new temple which is constructed not from inanimate materials but of living believers. The Holy Spirit indwells each individual believer (cf. John 14:17; Rom. 5:5; 8:9, 11; 1 Cor. 2:12; Gal. 3:2; 4:6; 1 John 3:24; 4:13), who is thus a "temple" (1 Cor. 6:19). But the temple in Ephesians 2:21–22 refers to the Holy Spirit's corporate "dwelling" (cf. 1 Cor. 3:16; 2 Cor. 6:16), His "temple" composed of all Jewish and Gentile believers.

Hoehner, H. W. (1985). Ephesians. In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck, Ed.) (Eph 2:11–3:13). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

9. "Access is probably the best translation of *prosagoge*, though it could be 'introduction.' (Foulkes) Embracing others was and is inherent to being united with God, as reflected in the following:

Leviticus 19:34 (NIV)

The alien living with you must be treated as one of your native-born. Love him as yourself, for you were aliens in Egypt. I am the LORD your God.

Psalms 68:6 (NIV)

God sets the lonely in families, he leads forth the prisoners with singing; but the rebellious live in a sun-scorched land.

Revelation 7:9-14 (NIV)

⁹ After this I looked and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and in front of the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands. ¹⁰ And they cried out in a loud voice: "Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb." ¹¹ All the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures. They fell down on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, ¹² saying: "Amen! Praise and glory and wisdom and thanks and honor and power and strength be to our God for ever and ever. Amen!" ¹³ Then one of the elders asked me, "These in white robes—who are they, and where did they come from?" ¹⁴ I answered, "Sir, you know." And he said, "These are they who have come out of the great tribulation; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."