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Ephesians 2:19-22
Adding Value Where You Are
4/21/24

Discussion Questions:

1. Do you feel like a participant or spectator at church? Why?
 2. Do you gather in a smaller group? How does it add value to your life? How do you add value to the group?
 3. How do you feel about calling God, "Father" and Jesus your brother?
 4. Read Matthew 12:50, what does this say about God's expectation as a member of God's family?
 5. Who were the "stones" in your life that have helped you to be who you are spiritually? Did it make a difference if they were or were not "holy"?
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Teaching Notes:

Ekklesia Greek for church means gathering or assembly.

From the time Christ ascended to the time Christ returns...
...we are created and called to gather together.

But our gatherings are not just showing up.

The point of gathering is to add value to the gathering for the gathered.

What happens? Here are some of the important things...

1. Obey the Lord
 2. Pray
 3. Love and meet needs for each other
 4. Break bread
 5. Praise God
 6. Have teaching
 7. Stir up/encourage each other to love & good works
- ...Sitting, listening & eating donuts is not really what it's about.

2:19 "Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, 20 having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief *cornerstone*, 21 in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, 22 in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit."

"Household of God" is a specific picture not just a family.
Household implies a unity, a structure, and a purpose.

1. A household is where you can survive and thrive.

A household works as one, everyone doing their part...
...so that everyone can succeed together.

In Christ, we are born of the Spirit & we are welcomed home, and we are put to work.

How do we become part of God's household?

John 1:12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name,

Part of being in the family is obedience to the Father.

Matthew 12:50 For whoever does the will of My Father in heaven is My brother and sister and mother."

God is our heavenly Father.

Jesus actually refers to Himself as our brother...

...And we are all brothers and sisters in the family.

When we are adopted, we have a new way of relating.

Romans 8:15 NIV

The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father."

AND just like in a kingdom: Family is a covenant relationship.

...There are responsibilities that come with the benefits.

Households have intimate access, you have a key, you can walk up anytime. You sleep in the same bed, you eat the same food, you have vulnerable knowledge.

Households have enduring bonds.

We are committed to being there and being present. When the chips are down and the need is real, we are there for each other.

Households have real acceptance, you don't have to be someone you are not, you can express yourself, you can wear your pajamas all day.

There are no big shots, but everyone is important.

Households provide life training, we teach, we model, we counsel. Children are trained to adulthood and mature children help others in the house.

But to have all this...we need a covenant.

Paul said Treat older men like fathers & younger men as brothers

Older women like mothers & younger women like sisters.

We don't disrespect or devalue our family...

...we show them the proper respect and value of...
...someone God has placed in the intimate parts of our lives.

We don't take advantage of our family...
...we give them the advantage of love and protection and help.

And in many cases when households are broken...
...covenant responsibilities or expectations were not fulfilled.

We learn from Scripture & the Holy Spirit and we must follow it.

20 having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief *cornerstone*,
21 in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, 22 in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.

Remember, God doesn't need a temple, we do.

1 Kings 8:27 "But will God indeed dwell on the earth? Behold, heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain You. How much less this temple which I have built!... 30 And may You hear the supplication of Your servant and of Your people Israel, when they pray toward this place. Hear in heaven Your dwelling place; and when You hear, forgive.

2. The temple is where we meet and grow.

-Solomon's temple took 7 years.
-Zerubbabel's or the second temple foundation took 2 years, they were delayed by distraction for 17 years, and then Haggai and Zechariah spurred them on & 4 years later it was finished.
-Herod's temple started in 20BC 46 years but was not complete until 63 AD...80 years....Right about the time Paul was writing.

Many in Paul's time would see the temple as always "growing"...
...And we are also meant to be always growing.

How does the temple begin? Jesus is the cornerstone.
A cornerstone is not just the first piece, it's the guiding piece.

We don't measure from the next stone...
...we measure from the cornerstone.

Then there is the foundation or first layer.
...That is the apostle and prophets.

- The church was started with the 12 apostles. That's finished.
- The prophets were inspired and spoke forth God's word.

The first layer of the church are the apostles and prophets who established the church and brought us God's word.

It is important to notice Paul says "fitted" together.
The stones of the temple were famously quarried and cut offsite.

We are fit together by God and meant to be unified and growing.

We are all different, but we are cut from the same stone...
...and measured up with the same cornerstone...
...We need to allow each stone to do what God intends it to do.

Just like the temple was being added to...we add to our faith...

II Peter 1:5-7 But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness, to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love.

Maturity is the goal so that we will fit well.

It is the goal of our discipleship to grow mature...
...When we talk about maturity, we see it in LIFE.

- Lead humbly with love and truth
- Invest eternally with hope and purpose
- Follow faithfully with grit and grace
- Enjoy abundantly with joy and thanksgiving

We are all fit together, growing to be more like Christ to fit well.

3. You have a holy role.

We are all a part of the whole. We each have a role and it is holy.

Serving in the house and the temple is not optional.
Contributing in the house and temple is not optional.
Participating in the house and the temple is not optional.
It is part of our covenant responsibility as members together.

And it is holy...

The temple & everything in it is described as holy. 92 in Leviticus.

God is holy and His household and dwelling place must be both intimately interconnected & spiritually holy.

Holy means my heart, my stuff, my choices, my glory is all for Him

Are you living a life that is separated and dedicated to the Lord?
How do you add value as a...
...member of the household and a stone in the temple?