

Family Union

Long Beach Alliance Church • June 8, 2014 • Pastor Chris Lankford

**In him you also are being built together into
a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.**

~Ephesians 2:22 (ESV)

1) At One Time You Were... But God In Christ By The Spirit...

- A) The whole of Ephesians 2 emphasizes metamorphosis from a state of sin and separateness (2:1-3, 11-12) to forgiveness by grace through faith in Jesus Christ (2:4-10, 13), resulting in re-creation of all God's people into a new reconciled and unified body of Christ (2:14-17).
- B) This unified body of Christ has access to God in the unity of the Holy Spirit (2:18) as a benefit of total identity (faith) with Christ. This revolutionary news of access through the indwelling Spirit of God radically changes the "place" of worship for all mankind (2:19-22).

2) At One Time You Were...

- A) God commanded His people to worship Him at the place where God Himself had established His dwelling (Deuteronomy 12:5). King David (Jewish King of the United Kingdom of Israel, ≈1000 BC) designated the building of the temple in Jerusalem (1 Chronicles 22:1). The Temple was completed by David's son, King Solomon (≈950 BC; 2 Chronicles 3:1-2).
- B) Upon completion, Solomon passionately dedicates (2 Chronicles 6:1-42) the Temple, making sacrifices and offerings to God. Dramatically, God accepts the offerings (2 Chronicles 7:1-3), making the Temple in Jerusalem the sacred location of worship for God's people.
- C) The Temple in Jerusalem was the exclusive location for worship and the place of God's presence among His people (2 Samuel 7:1-17). When the Temple was destroyed (587 BC), the Jews mourned the loss of God's presence (Ezekiel 9:3), and the damage to their worship (Psalm 137).

- D) Zerubbabel rebuilt the Temple (Ezra 3:8-13, 6:15-22) and Herod the Great expanded and refurbished the Temple (20-10 BC, *Antiquities*, Josephus) to spectacular glory. Jewish leadership sometimes abused their control of the Temple with unfair practices (Matthew 21:12-13; Luke 13:10-14).
- E) Jesus' teaching about the Temple radically challenged the Jews (John 2:18-22), and caused great confusion (Matthew 12:6). Jesus came to expansively change the locus of worship from the Spirit-filled Jerusalem Temple, to something explosively larger (John 4:23-24).

3) But God In Christ By The Spirit...

- A) Once again, Paul uses a metamorphosis concept to communicate the contrast from one state to an entirely new creation (Ephesians 2:19-22). "Strangers" are the non-citizenry of the population, and "aliens" are those who are outsiders or foreigners (2:19).
- B) "Strangers and aliens" is automatically viewed in the negative because it results ("so then...") from "access in one Spirit" producing newly minted "fellow citizens and... members of the household..." (2:18).
- C) Through Christ, there is citizenry with all of its inherent rights and responsibilities. More intimately, through Christ there is family. Salvation through Jesus Christ results in adoption (1:5), by which one who is a wanderer is welcomed home to join with the family. Refuge, protection, identity, security... All through Jesus Christ!
- D) Gently teasing the metaphor, Paul moves from familial language ("household..."), moving into more physical and architectural language (2:20). This builds full-force to Temple imagery, with a natural emphasis on worship in the location of God's Spirit dwelling place (2:20).
- E) The "apostles and prophets" sets a "perspectival lens" through which Paul views all of history. The Old Testament ("prophets") are viewed through the New Testament ("apostles"), set in place by the "cornerstone," Jesus Christ (2:20).
- F) This organic "structure" is actively growing, a living building formed by Jesus Christ for worship ("holy temple," 2:21). As though Christ is the General Contractor for Heaven, the focus is on the ultimate home of worship by 'every tribe, tongue, and nation' (cf. Revelation 7:9).
- G) Jesus is building His church in and through us (2:22)! Ultimately, Christ is constructing God's "dwelling" by the Spirit in us (family union)!



growth group guide

“family union”

(ephesians 2:19-22) june 9-13, 2014



warm up

What is the most awe-inspiring or amazing man-made building you have ever seen (in person)? Share what contributes to the “amazingness” of the structure with your group...

Any comments, observations, or questions from Sunday’s Sermon?



chop it up

Read Ephesians 2:1-22. There are several “contrasts” in Ephesians 2 (marked by: “you were...,” contrasted against “but now you are...”). List each, and discuss the unique features each contrast illuminates.

Ephesians 2:1-22 teaches us that “at one time” we were far away, “but now” we have been graciously brought near through faith in Jesus Christ. We are now in a position of privilege, a place of intimate inclusion. What are the rights and the privileges of your “new creation” position in Christ? Is there a downside to inclusion in Christ?



We have come to the end of our Spring Growth Group Quarter, which is a good time to look back at the whole of Ephesians 2 and ask the question, “What is God changing in my life” relating to the transformation which has come because I am part of the “household of God?”



Read 1 Corinthians 3:10-17 & 1
Corinthians 6:12-20

In what sense is a Christ-follower (as an individual) the Temple of God?
How can the individual be the Temple, while the entire community is also the Temple (Ephesians 2:18-22)? Which is it, individual or corporate body?



Mind the Gap

Sunday Mornings!

There is a GAP between our 1st service (which ends at 10:15AM) and our 2nd service (which begins at 10:45AM). We want to serve great coffee, good pasteries, and make sure everyone who comes will be welcomed and helped to “feel the hospitality of the Gospel” during our “Gap” between worship services.

If you are interested, we need someone (or a couple of someone's) to pick up pasteries each week (around 8:30AM'ish), prepare the coffee (around 9:00AM'ish), and make sure all the food stuff/supplies for the courtyard is prepped (by 10:00AM'ish) at the tables.

If you are interested in helping and/or coordinating this new and significant area of LBAC hospitality, drop us your information on a Connections Card, or call Michelle Crammer @ 562.420.1478. Thanks!