

Growth Group Questions – September 20, 2020

Introduction Questions:

- How are you doing?
 - [This question will always be here – it’s optional, but may help bring the passage back to mind if you meet later in the week] - If you heard the sermon this week, was there any part of the message or scripture passage that was particularly important or meaningful to you? If so, what?

Read: Ephesians 2:4-22

Understanding Questions:

- According to Paul, whose action and initiative results in our being saved?
- What does Paul say about OUR role (our human works) in our being saved?
 - In vs. 2:10, Paul expands on human works as they pertain to life (rather than salvation). What does he say about them in relation to how we live day to day?
- What does Paul say Jesus Christ has done to the dividing wall between humanity? What status does Paul describe that has been bestowed upon us? What responsibilities come with it?

Application Questions:

- Based on this passage and this week’s sermon, what does it mean to you to be “citizens with the saints and members of the household of God [2:19]”?
- Though Paul’s letters sometimes refer to salvation as a future event, here he writes with the conviction we have been saved already. Does assuming the latter view change anything in how you live day to day or in how you approach your relationship with God?
- Paul declares that Jesus breaks down the dividing walls and removes hostility between us and others. Whom have you experienced a dividing wall with and what can Jesus do to help break down that wall?

Additional Notes:

Though Paul sometimes speaks of salvation as a future event and at other times as an event that has already occurred, he is consistent in his assertion that our own actions or works cannot save us. Rather, it is God who takes the initiative in forgiving, recreating, and saving us, solely as a gift because God loves us.

The Jerusalem temple had walls separating male and female, Jews and Gentiles. Trespassers who crossed the lines could receive punishment. Jesus tears down such dividing walls (such as those based on race, sex, social class, culture, and language) that prevent us from loving and caring for our neighbors, even if they were once viewed as “aliens and foreigners.”

Ephesians 2:20 -- On Jesus as the cornerstone, see also Matthew 21.42, 1 Peter 2.6. For the concept in the Old Testament, see Psalm 118.22 and Isaiah 28.16.

Ephesians 2:22 -- On believers collectively (*you* plural) as a dwelling place for God, see also 1 Corinthians 3.16-17, 6.19, and 1 Peter 2.4-6.