

# Ephesians

A CHURCH ALIVE IN CHRIST

JUNE 18, 2023

## SERIES OVERVIEW:

*Ephesians is a letter written by the apostle Paul to Christians living in the city of Ephesus in order to strengthen their faith, promote their unity, and exhort them to holiness. He reminds them of God's great grace and the spiritual blessings every believer possesses. He prays for them to grow in their knowledge of God and what He has done for them in Christ. He emphasizes grace in the salvation of believers and prays that they would be able to comprehend the love of Christ and that they would be filled with the fullness of God.*

## MESSAGE TAKEAWAYS:

Week 5 we looked at **Ephesians 2:11-22** where we see that peace is not the absence of our circumstance but the presence of our King. Through Jesus, we have access to the Father. It is through the work of God that we are brought to peace – oneness and wholeness with God and in His Kingdom. God is the one who does all the action to draw us and to make us into a new creation - we are called to remember and posture ourselves in a way that remembers Jesus and His work and continually repent and confess, focusing back on Jesus and His redemptive work.

## CONVERSATION QUESTIONS:

- Pastor Matt talked about the verbs in this passage - and that “remember” is the only verb dependent upon us as believers. Every other verb is all action God is performing, we are just the objects of the action. Re-read verses 11-22 and write down, circle, or highlight all the verbs. How does reading this in light of God's doing encourage or convict you as an individual or as a group?

- We unpacked how God's Word proclaims that Jesus Himself is our peace, and the Greek for peace here is *"oneness/wholeness, when all essential parts are joined together"* How have we culturally or individually placed our definition of peace in other things? What happens when we find peace in Jesus, our King? How have you found this challenging in your life? Share stories of how God has reminded you/shown you through His truth and steadfast love that He is peace.
- The Greek word *"auxano"* means "to make to grow/to grow" as in *"I cause to increase, become greater."* How have you navigated the tensions of growing in Christ with the reality that we all face different seasons and different rates at which we grow? *As the Holy Spirit leads, pause to pray that He would guide you, that He would fill you with truth and grace, and that you would be faithful to trust the One who grows each in Him in His timing as He sees fit.*

## FINAL THOUGHTS:

*Pastor Matt closed by sharing about markers we see in our lives and in scripture when we have moved from Jesus as the focus of our lives and the reality that He alone is our peace. Since the Garden of Eden when Adam & Eve hid in shame and cast blame until now, mankind turns to blame and shame when we forget God.*

**First Steps (IDENTIFY):** Where in your life have you noticed blame and shame speaking loud in what you do/think/say? *You may want to pause before and pray through Psalm 139:23-24.*

**For blame:** look at what you are consuming/producing. Is it marked with any of the fruit of the flesh found in Galatians 5? Where is your focus? Where is your hope?

**For shame:** re-read Ephesians 1&2 - when you hear what Jesus has done and says about you, is this where your identity is placed? Or is there some other label that takes the place of His Word?

**Next Steps (CONFESS/REPENT):** As the Holy Spirit brings to mind markers of blame or shame, ask Jesus to remind you of His way and what He has done. The Holy Spirit is a helper who “will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.” (John 14:26b)

As needed, ask for your community to pray with you or seek out a conversation with a Pastor: <https://ncchapel.churchcenter.com/people/forms/551596>