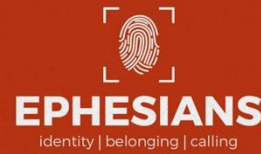


4. CONFIDENT LIVING IN UNCERTAIN TIMES

Think of a time when you have felt separated. It may have been as a child in a large shopping centre separated from your parents. It may have been the trauma of marriage separation. Or even this season of self-isolation. What did that look like and how did you feel?



Share about a time you felt separated from God.

The letter to the Ephesians celebrates the beauty of the church—the Bride of Christ. From our perspective the church isn't so pretty... But heaven sees more. Heaven sees the church as cleansed and made holy by Christ. (Lucado, M., 1998).

1. **Read Ephesians 2:11-22** – taking the time to reflect upon phrases and words used, new things learned, repeated phrases, words you're not sure the meaning of, and listening to what God is saying.
2. Paul discusses some of the distinctives of Jews and Gentiles¹ – make a list and think about their meaning.
3. Here's an exercise for the children (or adults). Take the river illustration (Murray-Darling basin) and draw two rivers one Jew and the other Gentile. Draw the rivers merging into one called 'the Church'. Under the Gentile section include: separated, without hope etc. In the new 'church' river see how many blessings you can find there ie. peace...
4. How would Paul's words have been initially received by both the Jewish and Gentile members of the Ephesian church?

¹ **Gentiles** (v. 11)—The Greek word is "ethnos," from which we get our English term "ethnic," it also signifies the non-Jewish world.

5. What do you think Paul means when he says that before these Ephesians were followers of Jesus they had 'no hope and without God in the world'? (see Ephesians 1:18;
6. How is Christ our 'peace'? (see 2:14,15,17; Philippians 4:7-9; Colossians 3:15)
7. Before Christ's death the Jewish nation judged their righteousness by their obedience to numerous laws, regulations, and sacrifices. In what way did Christ's life and death change that concept of righteousness?
8. What does this passage teach us about racial and cultural unity within the church of Jesus Christ?

How can you and I live confidently when life is so unsettled?

Through the cross of Jesus the Messiah.

It is in the cross that Jesus brings us into a relationship with God, no longer _____. vs 12

It is in the cross that Jesus gives us true and genuine _____ in life and in death. vs 12

It is in the cross that Jesus brings us both _____ and _____^{v16} Together as one body, Christ reconciled² both groups to God by means of his death on the cross...

It is in the cross that Jesus brings "this _____ of _____ to you Gentiles who were far away from him..."

It is in the cross that Jesus brings all of us "... to the _____ through the same _____ because of what Christ has done for us..."

Journaling

Take a few moments to record your personal insights from this lesson.

What are my privileges and responsibilities in belonging to God's family?

² **reconcile** (v. 16)—to change or exchange; to turn from hostility to friendship