

WARM-UP

- Tell us about one person in your household you are closest to. What do you like the most about him or her?
- Do you like group activities or do you prefer working alone? Why?
- Tell us about one of the groups of friends you belong to. What about this group drew you in?

WORD *¹⁹So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, ²⁰built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, ²¹in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. ²²In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.*

EPHESIANS 2:19-22

The apostle Paul wrote to the believers in Ephesus, both to Jews and Gentiles alike, reminding them of who Jesus is and what He has done for us. Jesus is the cornerstone, who was rejected by men but used by God for the salvation of all men (Psalm 118:21–22). As our cornerstone, He is our Savior and the foundation upon which we build and align our lives. Despite the ever-changing times and circumstances, we can be stable and sure because we are in Christ, who is stable and sure. Today, we will look at the results of Christ being our cornerstone.

1 | In Christ, we are no longer strangers or aliens but members of God's household.

So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God . . .

EPHESIANS 2:19

Before any of us met and believed in Christ, we were *far off* and *strangers to the covenants of promise*, we had *no hope*, and lived *without God* (Ephesians 2:12). But because of Jesus' sacrifice, we have been brought near and are reconciled to God, being adopted into His household. Once, we were His enemies living in sin and rebellion against God, but in love, He adopted us through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of His will. We now belong to God's family. He is our loving Father, and we are His beloved children. What does it mean for you to be a child of God?

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2 | In Christ, we are being built and joined together.

. . . in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. **EPHESIANS 2:21**

The apostle Paul highlighted the truth that Christ, who is Himself our peace, *has broken down the dividing wall of hostility* (Ephesians 2:14). This means that instead of having a distinct identity as either Jew or Greek, the believers have one identity in Christ, our cornerstone. Despite the stark differences between these two groups, their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ made them into one community, one body of followers of Christ (Galatians 3:28). Even today, this is an encouragement to us. Despite our own preferences, personalities, political views, and cultural backgrounds,

He who unites us is greater than anything that could divide us. Share about a time this became real to you.

3

In Christ, we are a holy temple and a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.

. . . ²¹in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. ²²In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.

EPHESIANS 2:21-22

As a community of believers, we are the church where the presence of the Lord dwells. Jesus revealed this truth to His disciples as well: *"For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them"* (Matthew 18:20). While it is also true that our bodies are the temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 6:19), God has desired to dwell with His people from the beginning. This was revealed many times—when He walked with Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden, when His presence dwelt among the Israelites in the tabernacle, when His glory filled the temple King Solomon built, when Jesus became flesh, and when the Spirit was poured out again and again to groups of believers in the book of Acts. What does this truth say then about how we are to live out our Christian faith?

APPLICATION

- Have you put your whole trust in Jesus, our cornerstone? Would you like to do so today and become a part of His family? Ask someone to pray with you to receive Jesus as your Lord and Savior.
- As believers, we are meant to live in community. Who is your church community? How have you learned to overcome your differences with them and grow together?
- Are there people around you who need to know Jesus as their Lord and Savior? How can you help them experience His salvation and become part of His family?

PRAYER

- Thank the Lord for Jesus' sacrifice, by which we have been reconciled to God and adopted into His family. Pray that He will remind you that you belong to Him every day.
- Pray for your spiritual family. Ask God for the grace to look past your differences and build with each other toward God's purpose.
- Ask God to give you the courage to share the gospel of Jesus Christ with your family and friends. Pray for their hearts to be open to receive Him into their lives.



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