

Small Group Questions...

Who do you think WE are? (Ephesians 2:11-22)

Have someone pray asking the Spirit to move and speak during your small group time.

ICEBREAKER

- Describe to the group a time when you have felt distant from God or from others
- I wonder have you ever thought about or even tracked your self-talk when you are in those kind of spaces...
- What's going on in your mind, what do you hear yourself saying?
- If you are comfortable, feel free to share some of those "elephant stakes" that I described in Sundays message. (You may need to have someone explain the "elephant stake" metaphor!) Things that hold us back from drawing closer to God and to others...

You may like to read Ephesians 2:11-22

Paul wants us to know without a shadow of a doubt, WHO WE ARE IN JESUS so that we can boldly move into all that he has for us! He calls us from distance to nearness

DISCUSS

V11 Therefore, remember that formerly you who are Gentiles by birth and called "uncircumcised" by those who call themselves "the circumcision" (which is done in the body by human hands)—

-What does Paul want the Gentiles and the Jews to remember here?

V12 remember that at that time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world.

-What are the 5 barriers/"elephant stakes" described by Paul in this verse?

-Can you relate to any of them?

Basically Paul was saying that "they were underprivileged, separate, disconnected and miles away from God. - EVER FELT LIKE THAT?

13 But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near by the blood of Christ.

-You might like to spend some time praising Jesus for this... You might even like to share communion...

-What is the significance of Christ's blood?

Matt 26:28 Jesus says "This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins."

V14 For he himself is our peace, who has made the two groups one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, 15 by setting aside in his flesh the law with its commands and regulations. His purpose was to create in himself one new humanity out of the two, thus making peace, 16 and in one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility. 17 He came and preached peace to you who were far away and peace to those who were near. 18 For through him we both have access to the Father by one Spirit.

-Notice how Paul uses the terms barrier and dividing wall! What is the significance of those words in this passage?

Jesus the prince of peace has removed all barriers that keep us out and has given us full access with full privileges to boldly draw near to the Father.

Church He calls us from distance to nearness. It's time for us to draw near.

RESPONSE

You might like to ask your group to reflect on these questions and depending on where everyone is at, encourage people to share

-Are you holding back? Are you standing back in your relationship with God and with others?

-Is your self-talk "I can't! I won't." If that is you, this passage screams out, "Yes you can! YES YOU CAN! In and through Jesus YOU CAN."

-What are your "ELEPHANT STAKES"? What's holding you back?

-Let's CALL them for what they are? Let's name them and let's hand them over to Him.

You may like to pray for each other

In him there are no more BARRIERS no more elephant stakes, we need to KNOW and believe this with all of our hearts. I hope you laid them down, I hope you responded to His invitation to draw near.

As we finish let's celebrate ... V19 Consequently, WE are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God's people and also members of his household, 20 built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. 21 In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. 22 And in him WE too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.

This is WHO WE are!

PRAYER

You may like to finish by praying for each other

God Bless.