

Growth Group Leader Guide

This “growth group leader guide” is meant to be just that, a guide. Please feel free as the leader of your group to add questions or comments as you feel necessary to fit your group’s dynamics.

Also, don’t feel pressured to cover every question.

Ephesians – “The depth of God’s grace lived out in love.”

Ephesians 2:17-22

First Observation – The gospel is for both Jew & Gentile. **Verse 17**

- What does Paul mean by “peace” in verse 17? Read Romans 5:1-2 & 10-11 to help answer this question.

Second Observation – We now have access to God. **Verse 18**

- How does sin separate us from God?
- How does sin separate us from each other?

Third Observation – We are fellow citizens with the saints. **Verse 19**

- Compare and contrast **verse 12** with **verse 19**.
 - **Benjamin Merkle** - The status of Gentiles who now believe in Jesus as the Messiah has been completely transformed. Those who were Christ-less (“separated from Christ”), homeless (“alienated from the commonwealth of Israel”), friendless (“strangers to the covenants of promise”), hopeless (“having no hope”), and Godless (“without God”), are now citizens, members of the household of God...

Fourth Observation – We are not just citizens, but family members. **Verse 19**

- How does Ephesians 2:19 relate to Ephesians 1:5?
- Do you struggle seeing God as a loving father? Why or why not?
- Why is seeing God as a loving father so important to our sanctification?

- **Read Romans 8:15-16.** How do these verses in Romans help us trust God in obedience?
- How does verse 19 relate to Eph. 1:5?
- According to Eph. 1:5, why did God adopt us as sons?

Fifth Observation – We are not just family members, but the temple of God. **Verse 20-22**

- In what ways is being the temple of God even more intimate than being adopted into His family?
- Is it surprising that God calls the church collectively (not just individuals) the temple of God? How is the church the temple of God?

Sixth Observation – God is the one building the temple. **Verse 20 & Verse 22**

- How is God building the church?
- What is significant about God being the builder of the church?

Seventh Observation – This Temple is “built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets.” **Verse 19**

- What does it mean that the apostles and prophets are foundational to the temple?
- Why did God send out apostles and raise up prophets in the first century before the New Testament was written?
- How is Scripture foundational to the church?

Eighth Observation – Jesus is the cornerstone. **Verse 20**

- **Read Isaiah 28:16** – What is significant about the cornerstone?
 - **Leaders Cheat:** The cornerstone was the first stone laid and tied all the walls firmly together. It had to be perfect because it determined how straight the walls of the building would end up.
- How is the cornerstone a perfect analogy about Christ?
 - **One Pastor** - Christ is the anchor of the foundation that is built by the apostles and prophets through their oral and written proclamation of the gospel. This new temple is built on Christ, the vital cornerstone.

Ninth Observation – Those who are united with Christ are the stones that make up the temple. **Verse 21-22**

- **Read Acts 21:27-29** and discuss how offensive what the Jews said in verse 28 must have been to Trophimus and the Ephesians.
- With the context of Act 21, why is Ephesians 2:21-22 significant?

Tenth Observation – The temple is still growing. **Verses 21-22**

- How is the temple still growing?
 - **Leaders Cheat:** Both in holiness and numerically.
- How does Ephesians 5:25-27 relate to Ephesians 2:21?
- How does Christ sanctify the Church?

Eleventh observation – The distinctive feature of the temple is that it is God’s dwelling place. **Verse 22**

- How was the temple the dwelling place of God in the Old Testament?
- Read and discuss Leviticus 26:9-12.
- Even though God dwelt with his people, Israel, how was he still separated from them in the Old Testament?
 - **Leaders Cheat:** One way was the veil or curtain that separated the Holy of Holies from the rest of the temple. This curtain was 60 feet tall and 4 inches thick.
- What is the significance of the veil being torn in two when Christ died on the Cross?
Matthew 27:51
- Read and discuss Hebrews 10:19-20

Twelfth observation – Gentile Christians are now one with Jewish Christians and are the temple of God.

- How does this whole passage (Eph. 2:11-22) promote unity within the church?
- How does the idea of us being a Holy Temple promote unity?
- Read and discuss the following quote.

- **Benjamin Merkle** – According to Revelation, believers from “every tribe and language and people and nation” (Rev. 5:9) will worship around God’s throne. But often the church on earth does not look like the church in heaven. We must work hard not to contradict the gospel inadvertently by refusing to worship, fellowship, or serve with people who look, speak, or act differently than we do. The gospel unites all believers together into one family and one temple.