

COMMUNITY GROUP STUDY GUIDE**One in Christ**

EPHESIANS 3:1-13

OVERVIEW

Everything—literally everything—in heaven and on earth is being united in Christ (1:10). Only when we understand who Christ is can we begin to understand who we are. We often read Paul’s letters thinking about all Scripture calls us to do. But before Ephesians calls us to do anything, it reminds us what God has done in Christ.

Our identity is not based on what we do, but who we are. Our identity is not earned and achieved but declared and received. Our identity, as Christians, is found “in Christ.” We are united to Christ—and that changes everything about us! Paul’s letter to the church in Ephesus explains what we were (apart from Christ), who we are (in Christ), and then how we should live as followers of Christ, all for the glory of Christ.

APPLY // EPHESIANS 2:11-22

1. Read Ephesians 2:11-22.
2. What is Paul’s main point in these verses?
3. Paul’s one command in these verses is “remember.” Why are we so prone to forget the gospel?
4. How does Restoration Church display the “oneness” of the gospel? In which areas, do we as a church need to grow in this aspect of gospel-demonstration?
5. Why are we tempted to divide over race, social class, education, etc.?
6. How does looking at Jesus on the cross empower us to pursue others who are vastly different from us?
7. How have you seen, or experienced, gospel-centered reconciliation between people?
8. Why is it important to remember the Jesus is the cornerstone of the church? How can we assess if Jesus is the cornerstone of our church?
9. Why is it important to remember that each believer is indwelt with the Spirit and being built together into a dwelling place for God?

STUDY // EPHESIANS 3:1-13

Study the passage of Scripture aiming to faithfully interpret and apply what you observe. Remember we study God’s word not just to increase our knowledge, but to increase our trust in and treasuring of Jesus Christ.

1. Read Ephesians 3:1-13.

2. How does Paul think of himself according to these verses? Why is Paul able to think of himself this way and not in a prideful way?
 3. In verse 3 Paul says “the mystery [of Christ, v. 5] was made known to me by revelation.” What’s the significance of the mystery of the gospel coming from divine revelation rather than human “invention”?
 4. According to 3:1-7, What was Paul’s ministry? What did God reveal to New Testament apostles and prophets that was previously unknown?
 - a. Here’s helpful insight on this mystery previously being unknown: “What was completely unknown and inaccessible to human understanding was not God’s plan to save all nations, but how God could accomplish such a plan. That was a complete mystery!...God’s gospel promise to bless all nations and been known since Abraham. But the strategy of how God could ever achieve this ancient plan was a complete mystery. Paul’s gospel was therefore not a new gospel, but the ancient gospel revealed—that ancient gospel had at last been accomplished and clarified.” (*Ephesians for You*, Richard Coekin; emphasis added)
 5. According to 3:6, what is the mystery of the gospel? Discuss what it means that the Gentiles are:
 - a. “Fellow heirs”
 - b. “Members of the same body”
 - c. “Partakers of the promise”
 6. What did God’s grace empower Paul to do?
 7. According to 3:10-13, what is God’s purpose for the Church?
 - a. What is the “manifold wisdom” of God? (cf. 1 Corinthians 1:26-30)
 - b. To whom is this wisdom manifest? (cf. 1 Peter 1:12)
 - c. How does the church display this wisdom?
 - d. How does 3:10 relate to what Paul wrote back in 1:10?
 8. Verse 11 says “this was according to the eternal purpose that he has realized in Christ Jesus.” What does this tell us about the character of God?
 9. According to verse 8, what’s our position before God? Why should this position amaze and assure us?
 10. Paul tells the Ephesians not to “lose heart” over his imprisonment for the gospel (verse 13). Why would the Ephesians be tempted toward worrying about Paul? How does Paul’s understanding of God’s cosmic plan, enable him to say “Don’t worry about me!”
 11. What does it mean that Paul’s suffering for the Ephesians is their glory?
- General Bible study questions:
 - **God:** What does this passage teach me about the character of God?
 - **Humanity:** What does this passage teach me about myself and my need for God?
 - **Christ:** How does this passage teach me that God has met my needs in the person and work of Jesus Christ?
 - **Response:** How should I respond with my affections and my actions?

ACCOUNTABILITY

Relationships developed and deepened during accountability provide regular encouragement, and when necessary admonition, to spur each other on to delight in the supremacy of Jesus Christ. Ask one another heart-probing, clarifying questions, and help each other apply the gospel to your lives.

QUESTION: Praise God for the gospel unity of Restoration Church – and pray that we’d continue to have such unity even as we pursue increased diversity.