

# Christ and the Church

Proclamation Life Groups; Week of Sunday, November 1, 2020; Steve Thiel

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**Sermon Theme:** As a result of the gospel of Jesus Christ, Gentiles are revealed to be fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God. They are therefore obligated to walk in a manner worthy of their calling, working hard to preserve the church's unity and promote the church's maturity.

## **I. The Background of Ephesians – Read Ephesians 1:1-6:24 and Acts 19:1-10**

- A. What are some reasons for thinking that Ephesians was written as a letter that was intended to be circulated through various churches in Asia as opposed to one specific local church?
- B. As you think about the message of Ephesians, what would you say are some of the recurring themes and repeated words throughout the letter? If you were going to divide the book of Ephesians into parts, where would you make the divisions and why?

## **II. The Message of Ephesians – Read Ephesians 1:1-3:21 and 4:1-6:24**

- A. Paul spends the first half of the letter reminding the saints of who they were before Christ and who they are now in Christ. What does this tell you about the ongoing work of the gospel in your life? How can you fight to keep the gospel message in the forefront of your mind on a daily basis?
- B. Paul repeatedly uses the phrase “in Christ” (especially 1:3-14). What are some ways in which he uses this phrase? How is it helpful to be reminded that your identity is first and foremost in Christ?
- C. As you look at Ephesians 2, how do you see the grace and power of God in both the salvation of sinners (2:1-10) and the ongoing sanctification in the believer's life (2:11-22)? What are your thoughts about the importance of the local church according to Paul in Ephesians 3:7-13?
- D. Ephesians 4 marks a shift in Ephesians as Paul begins detailing the manner in which Christians should “walk.” As you read 4:1-5:21, how many times do you see the theme of walking? What does this idea communicate with regard to the daily life of a believer or unbeliever?
- E. As you think about chapters 4-6, where would you specifically like to grow in “putting off the old self” and growing in God's likeness (4:22-24)? How is the local church involved in that process?

## **III. The Application of Ephesians – Read Ephesians 1:1-6:24**

- A. What would those closest to you say that you find beautiful? How would they know? Do you think it's possible to love Christ without loving His Church? How would you like to grow in seeing and savoring the beauty of Christ AND His Church?
- B. Weeds naturally spring up in a garden, regardless of the intentionality. What are some common weeds that naturally seem to grow up in your relationships and in the church? What are some specific ways in which you can grow in uprooting weeds and cultivating fruit in the church?