

Lesson 4

Church Matters to the Unchurched!

Sharing Question:

Someone has said, “Ours is a world of walls and barriers - terribly disconnected and divided.” Do you think that is an accurate statement? If so, where do you see evidence of this?

Study and Discussion Questions:

1. What deep-seated hostility serves as a background for Paul’s discussion of the Church in Ephesians 2:11-22? Which “group” did most of the Ephesians belong to? How were they viewed by the Jewish “church?” (Acts 10-11, 15, 21:17-29) What “labels” were used to identify them? **Application:** Do you think a similar spirit of alienation and estrangement confronts the contemporary church? Why? Is any of this God-ordained, like it was with the Jew and Gentile? (Romans 9)
2. How does Ephesians 2:12 describe the spiritual “separation” of the Gentiles before their conversion? How could anybody really be “without God in the world?” What would be the advantage of “remembering” such exclusions, as Paul recommends? **Application:** What valuable recognition does the Church of Christ bring to its unchurched community?
3. How does Ephesians 2:13-18 describe the church’s experience of “reconciliation?” What does it mean to be “reconciled?” Who are the people described as “reconciled” in this text? Where does the church fit in this process? **Application:** Why is the church’s message of reconciliation (2 Corinthians 5:20) better than the message of toleration that is frequently marketed to the unchurched?
4. What does it mean that Jesus, Himself, is our peace? What did He do to make peace and reconciliation a reality? (Ephesians 2:15-18) Who has access to the Father as a result? **Application:** Do these verses imply that the whole human race is now united? What does Galatians 3:26-28 mean to you?
5. How does Ephesians 2:19-22 describe the church? What does it mean to you to be a “member of God’s family?” According to this text, what is the basis for one’s inclusion in this family? **Application:** What makes this such Good News to the unchurched?
6. In what sense is the church a reconstruction of “the temple of God?” What was the historical significance of this image? (1 Kings 8:1-11) Why did the image require reconstruction?

Application: What does the presence of the church as “the temple of God” mean to the unchurched in today’s world?