**Reconnect II**

**Reconnecting With One Another**

**God Creates Family**

Open: This weekend we spent some time thinking about becoming reconnected with God and with one another. In this lesson, I will spend some time looking at how, in Christ, we are connected both to God and to one another.

Eph 1:3 Every spiritual blessing IN CHRIST.

The point: We are one IN HIM. Outside of him we were not one, to say the least!

Our oneness is IN HIM!

v.4 We are holy and blameless in Him

v. 5 We have adoption into his family!!! God took us in. He chose us!!! In Roman tradition, adopted sons had full inheritance.

Think about the implications for us. We are connected in the most intimate possible way with the God who created the universe.

We are also family.

Adoption is a big theme in the Bible. God tells us/foreshadows for us our relationship with him by adoption:

1. Ruth was adopted by Naomi (and therefore married Boas, the father of Obed, the father of Jesse, the father of David. A hint about our adoption.

2. Moses was adopted by Pharaoh. Pharaoh (king, symbol of God here) adopts a slave into his household. Moses a prefigure of Jesus.

3. Esther was adopted by Mordecai. Esther saved Israel, becoming a prefigure of Jesus.

4. Oh, and guess who else got adopted in the Bible: Jesus!

Romans 9:4 Israel itself was also adopted

Romans 8:23 In another sense, we have not yet been adopted but will be [fully] adopted when we reach heaven.

Illustration: the movie *Instant Family*. Mark Wahlberg.

It was not always this way!

The way Paul puts it: Eph 2:1-7!!! What did we have outside of Christ? This is not a pretty picture.

v. 1 Dead in your sins.

v. 3 Gratifying the cravings of your sinful nature.

v. 4 Objects of wrath.

v. 5 But… Praise God for the but here

Skip down to Eph 2:11-12

Where were we at? Spiritually, you were an orphan.

a. v. 11 Uncircumcized (I can live with that)

b. v. 12 Separate from Christ

c. v. 12 Excluded from citizenship

d. v. 12 Without hope

e. v. 12 Without God Talk about being on the outside looking in.

But… v. 13

v. 14-18

a. He has made the two (Jew and Gentile) one

b. He has destroyed the barrier

Look at what we have in our singles ministries! Black, white, Hispanic Asian, country music fan, rocker and hip-hop, old and young and yes, even Republican and Democrat!!!!

We are one. Q: How are we one? IN CHRIST!!!

v. 17 In context: Who was “near” the Jews. Who was “far away” Us!

Good news! It does not matter how far away you are.

We can be and we are reconnected In Christ!!!

v. 17 Q: is there a separate Holy Spirit for the black and the white?

 For the old and the young?

 For the rich and the poor?

 For the male and the female?

Q: Do we still have dividing lines in the church, and hostilities?

Yeah!

He is our peace!!! v. 14

You want to get close to your brother or sister: come close to Jesus.

Q: What else do we have IN CHRIST?

Eph 1:7-14

a. Redemption.

b. Forgiveness

v. 8 I love this word lavish…. Lavish

Pour so much on that you can hardly even hold it. (but v. 8 he did it with wisdom and understanding so as to not totally spoil it….)

v. 9 He let us in on the mysteries hidden for ages.

Q: What is this mystery?

v. 11 chosen

v. 13 included

Ephesians 2:19-22.

We are not strangers around here.

v. 19 We say “hello brother, hello sister.” What about “Hello, fellow-citizen.”

v. 19 Members of the same household. Welcome home. This is your family. (not just this is your spiritual family) (undo the power point briefly on zoom so people can see each other)

v. 20 Our unity is based on where we stand.

Our foundation is Jesus Christ, but with the Bible as our standard (the apostles and prophets). Our family covenant is in place. We do not need to negotiate terms.

v. 21 We are a building. We are a temple.

This is SO important. We rise and we fall together. Our society is so individualistic. We are a dwelling for God TOGETHER

In the religious world you go to the church that “meets your needs.”

I do not join the family that “meets my needs.” You are my family. I ain’t going nowhere else!!!!!

God put me in this family!!! I think he knew what he was doing!

Ephesians 3:2-13

Q: What is this mystery?

v. 6 The mystery is that through the gospel the Gentiles are heirs together with Israel: members together of one body, and sharers together in the promise in Christ Jesus.

God makes connections.

v. 8-10 I was nothing, but for some reason God gave the mystery to me.

I love Eph 3:10!!!!! His intent (plan) was that now, **through the church** the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms.

Connection, if it comes at all, comes through the Church!

In Him and through faith in him, we may approach God with freedom and confidence.

Eph 3:14-21.

What do we have in Christ? What do we have in the household of Christ? What do we have in this crazy, somewhat disfunctional thing we call church or family—our home?

We have love that is high, wide, long and deep!!! That is four dimensions, folks!!!

v. 19 If only we knew this love! What is it like? How can I describe it?

It “surpasses knowledge.”

If we knew this love, then we would be “filled to the brim (measure) with the fullness of God.

What can God do to and through us to create community?

“Immeasurable more than all we can ask or even imagine” by his power.

Brothers and sisters, if we REALLY got this, then everything in the Christian life would make sense, and the Church would become what Jesus wants it to be.