

**Ephesians 2:1-22**  
**The new Temple**

**Warm Up**

What's the most surprising thing you discovered about the Church when you became a Christian? Was it the diversity? Was it the love? Was it new and unexpected friendships? Share your thoughts.

**Background and context**

Paul's letter to the Ephesian church is unlike many of his other letters, in that he does not address any specific problem or heresy. One of the letter's main themes is to help the Ephesians better understand God's purposes and goals for the Church as a whole. In a world where we all crave stability and security, humans create institutions and systems to produce this. However, human sin causes these institutions to become corrupt and flawed. God's plan for the Church is to create a new humanity in Christ, which will bring peace and stability. Both Jew and Gentile in Christ, becoming the temple where God lives. But this is not the end. Ultimately the whole of creation becomes God's temple where Christ will reign over His new humanity, those who put their faith in Him. It is the place where He is both worshipped and encountered.

**Thinking it through: Main discussion/activity**

**READ Ephesians 2:1-22.** What are the surprising things in the passage? What is new? What don't you really understand?

1. **Read v 1-10.** Paul describes people as being dead in their sins. What did he mean by this? What did it look like according to Paul?
2. What do you think it means to be under God's wrath?
3. How does Paul describe our escape from wrath and our new identity? Highlight words in the text that reveal it.
4. **Read v11-20** How were we (Gentiles) once separated and "far away" from Jews?
4. What has God done to bring Jews and Gentiles together and reconcile them to Himself? Highlight what the text suggests.
5. **Read v19.** What does Paul suggest Gentiles have received as a result of reconciliation?
6. **Read v15-16.** What do Jews need to do in order to be part of this new humanity?
7. **Read v21-22** What is the purpose of a temple? Why are we being built into one?
8. **Read John 4:21-24.** How does this verse link to the purpose of God's church?
9. **Read Rev 7:9-10.** What does the future hold for the Church? How does it sound?
10. **Read Rev 21:22.** What does the absence of a temple suggest about God's plan for the whole of creation?

**Discipleship and Application**

11. What does *worship in spirit and truth*, look like for you?

**Try to leave 15-20 mins to talk about prayer needs of the group and to pray.**

There are many creative ways of praying together: writing prayers, using candles as a focus, reading prayers or praying for each other in pairs.