

Today:
April 26, 2015

Scripture Focus: Ephesians 2:11-22

¹¹ Don't forget that you Gentiles used to be outsiders. You were called "uncircumcised heathens" by the Jews, who were proud of their circumcision, even though it affected only their bodies and not their hearts. ¹² In those days you were living apart from Christ. You were excluded from citizenship among the people of Israel, and you did not know the covenant promises God had made to them. You lived in this world without God and without hope. ¹³ But now you have been united with Christ Jesus. Once you were far away from God, but now you have been brought near to him through the blood of Christ.

¹⁴ For Christ himself has brought peace to us. He united Jews and Gentiles into one people when, in his own body on the cross, he broke down the wall of hostility that separated us. ¹⁵ He did this by ending the system of law with its commandments and regulations. He made peace between Jews and Gentiles by creating in himself one new people from the two groups. ¹⁶ Together as one body, Christ reconciled both groups to God by means of his death on the cross, and our hostility toward each other was put to death.

¹⁷ He brought this Good News of peace to you Gentiles who were far away from him, and peace to the Jews who were near. ¹⁸ Now all of us can come to the Father through the same Holy Spirit because of what Christ has done for us.

¹⁹ So now you Gentiles are no longer strangers and foreigners. You are citizens along with all of God's holy people. You are members of God's family. ²⁰ Together, we are his house, built on the foundation of the apostles and the prophets. And the cornerstone is Christ Jesus himself. ²¹ We are carefully joined together in him, becoming a holy temple for the Lord. ²² Through him you Gentiles are also being made part of this dwelling where God lives by his Spirit.

(Ephesians 2:11-22, New Living Translation)

Notes from Worship:

How did God catch your attention? To what is God calling you this week?

Questions for Discussion:

- How does this passage help you understand better the work of Jesus Christ? Does it give you any new imagery or language for His importance to us?
- What experience do you have of being brought into something from which you were formerly excluded?
- How does this passage affect your understanding of the word "peace"?

This Week: **April 27-May 2**

Scripture Readings:

Monday 4/27	Tuesday 4/28	Wednesday 4/29	Thursday 4/30	Friday 5/1	Saturday 5/2
Lamentations 1:1-3:36	Lamentations 3:37-5:22	Ezekiel 1-4	Ezekiel 5-8	Ezekiel 9-12	Ezekiel 13-16

Questions for Reflection:

These questions are meant to help get you thinking about the readings for each day. Feel free to also use this space to jot down other questions and insights gleaned from your reading.

Monday

When in your life have you felt like the author of Lamentations? What helped you through your time(s) of grief?

Tuesday

What jumps out to you in the book of Lamentations?
Where is there hope present throughout this book of lament?

Wednesday

What do you find most significant about Ezekiel's call story (Ezekiel 2-3)? Why?

Thursday

How does Ezekiel combine proclamation and action in communicating God's message (see Ezekiel 5)? How does prophetic action add to God's word?

Friday

Which of Ezekiel's visions is the most striking to you? How so?

Saturday

Ezekiel employs several images to communicate the word of the Lord: a vine (Ezekiel 15), an adulterous woman (Ezekiel 16), etc. How do these images add to God's message?

Taking Scripture to Heart:

As we continue focusing on the life and teachings of Jesus, our memory text is **Philippians 2:5-11**. Let these verses dwell within you, to help you focus on Jesus Christ, the center of our faith.

Next Sunday: May 3, 2015

Theme: Worthy is the Lamb: Apocalyptic literature in the Bible

Scripture Focus: *Revelation 5; 21:1—22:7*