**Week #10**

***One Nation in Christ***

**Key Passages**

***Ephesians 2:11-22 (ESV)***

***Therefore, remember that at one time you Gentiles in the flesh, called “the uncircumcision” by what is called the circumcision, which is made in the flesh by hands—remember that you were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility by abolishing the law of commandments expressed in ordinances, that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace, and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby killing the hostility. And he came and preached peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near. For through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father.***

***So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.***

**Introduction**

I will never forget the time our youth pastor taught from the above passage and then had us break into small groups for discussion. I was assigned the “younger” youth boys. You can imagine how uncomfortable I was when they ask me, “What does it mean to be circumcised?” At first, all the color drained from my face, and then I turned several shades of red as I stammered my way through that conversation. (Colossians 2:6-15) But, you’ll be happy to know, this lesson is not about circumcision. In actuality, It’s about finding peace on earth, racial reconciliation and building God’s household. You may be thinking, “How in the world is she going to pull all of that together?” Well, with the help of the Holy Spirt, all things are possible!

As we start, and for the sake of illustration, I hope you will forgive me for taking the liberty of using our key passage out of context for just a moment to make a personal application. Then, in bite sized chunks, we will try to synthesize chapters two, three and four of the book of Ephesians. And in doing so, we’ll uncover just one of the divine mysteries found within the treasure chest of Paul’s letter to the Ephesians.

**Broken Together**

Peace…. We so often use the word, but do we have even the slightest notion of it’s true significance? For example, we talk about world peace or peace on earth and good will towards men, and then we hear talk of peace treaties that never seem to materialize. Or some say, “I need some peace of mind,” or, “Can’t I just get some peace and quiet?” A priest, or pastor may ask a dying person, “Do you want to make peace with your maker?” We find these words engraved on tomb stones, “rest in peace.” Yet in reality, the only ones who die and *rest in peace* are those who are *in Christ* because, as we just read, *He is Peace*! In a world that seems to be in perpetual conflict, it seems that peace is nowhere to be found. But, in our heart of hearts, wouldn’t you agree that peace is something that none of us can live very long without?

Now it’s one thing when the walls of hostility exist between nations, but it’s altogether different when the walls of hostility become the four walls in which you live. Our homes should be havens of rest -- a place to escape a harsh and cruel world, not battlefields. Yet when there is hostility among the ones who live with you, the war can escalate to the point of domestic violence. Thankfully, I have not known this extreme, but I have worked with women who have, and they all have scars, be they emotional, physical or both. They don’t always survive. The day after I wrote this, I got the tragic news that a disciple and sister in Christ, who lives in Nicaragua, was killed by her husband. Dorcas, who is vital part of our ministry, was discipling her. It is heartbreaking! Yet this woman truly is at rest and peace, with Jesus. Some of you know quite well what I am talking about. If so, please seek help before it’s too late. This is the only counsel I have to offer you, but I think you will find both wisdom and encouragement from the following passages.

**DIGGING DEEPER: Read the following passages and make notes of any insights and personal applications.**

* Hebrews 12:1-3; John 8:12, 31-36, 10:1-10; 1Corinthians 1-17; 2 Corinthians 6:14; Ephesians 5:8; Colossians 1:12-14; Galatians 4:28-29; 1 Peter 1:15-16

When Art and I got married, we were equally yoked. Both of us were separated from God and one another because of our sins. Consequently, it was not the happily ever after we had hoped for. But then again, it seldom is for lost people. For us, I guess it was as good as it was ever going to get without the peace and love of Jesus to bind us together. Then, two years later when the Lord in His grace saved me, things went from bad to worse, and the dividing walls of hostility came up in our marriage. Because now I was yoked to the Lord Jesus, but Art remained yoked to sin. I had been rescued from the kingdom of darkness, but Art was still under the dominion of the one who comes to kill, steal and destroy. Light and dark don’t mix. And this went on for thirteen years as I prayed for my husband’s salvation.

Then, when he was forty years old, Art bowed his knees to the Prince of Peace, and through repentance and surrender he was born again. At that point, we had been married for about 16 years. As we suffered through the consequences of these years of sin, we had a lot of brokenness that only the Lord could heal. So about a year and a half later, at the suggestion of a counselor, we renewed our wedding vows. It was our seventeenth wedding anniversary. The passage we choose for our wedding program was Ephesians 2:14-18, and this is what was written on our program:

“On the third day of May, seventeen years ago, we took our vows before God, whom we only knew from afar. Today, we take great joy in sharing with you our vows before the One who is our Father, Lord, Savior and God. How fitting it is that Jesus first miracle was at a wedding on the “third day”. Today you are our witness to another display of His miraculous grace. He, who is our peace, has redeemed our marriage and brought us together as one. The greatest miracle of all is new-birth through Christ Jesus and redemption from sins. Through Him all things are made new! It is our desire to give Him, who alone is worthy, all the praise and honor and glory. Jesus is the reason we are here today. Thank you for making our joy complete with your presence!”

***Ephesians 2:14-18 (ESV)***

***For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility by abolishing the law of commandments expressed in ordinances, that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace, and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby killing the hostility. And he came and preached peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near. For through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father.***

If you knew our whole story, you might understand just how applicable, these verses are to us. There is a new song by Casting Crowns that poignantly describes our marriage union. In fact, we could have written these lyrics. It is titled *Broken* *Together*. Not only did the Lord break us together, but He is building us together, and in Him… we are held together. We really are a miracle.

* Can you give a few examples of what it means to be unequally yoked. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* How do you use the word “peace” in your everyday life and what does it means to you? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* Do you need some peace? Then this exercise may be the single most important part of this lesson. You will find much personal application if you will read the following passages and then list everything you discover about peace. But remember, it will require you becoming a doer of the Word and not just a hearer of the Word! Ephesians 6:15; Colossians 1:20, 3:15; Hebrews 12:11-14; 1 Peter 3:11-14; John 16:33, 14:27; Psalms 29:1-11, 34:14, 85:10, 119:165, Proverbs 14:30, 16:7, 17:1; Isaiah 26:3, 32:17; 48:18-22; 53:5; 57:2-21; Micah 5:5; Romans 5:1; 1 Corinthians 7:5; 2 Corinthians 13:11\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Pride and Prejudice**

***Ephesians 3:1-22 (ESV)***

***For this reason, I, Paul, a prisoner for Christ Jesus on behalf of you Gentiles—assuming that you have heard of the stewardship of God’s grace that was given to me for you, how the mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I have written briefly. When you read this, you can perceive my insight into the mystery of Christ, which was not made known to the sons of men in other generations as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit. This mystery is that the Gentiles are fellow heirs, members of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.***

***Of this gospel I was made a minister according to the gift of God’s grace, which was given me by the working of his power. To me, though I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, and to bring to light for everyone what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God who created all things, so that through the church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places. This was according to the eternal purpose that he has realized in Christ Jesus our Lord, in whom we have boldness and access with confidence through our faith in him. So I ask you not to lose heart over what I am suffering for you, which is your glory.***

***For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named, that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith—that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.***

So now that we have talked about peace on the home front, let’s broaden the scope a little and talk about another area of peace and reconciliation available to those who are part of God’s family. Reading through the narratives found in the gospels and observing how Jesus interacted with people, it becomes clear that He was not a respecter of men, or even certain ethnic groups. He loved everyone. Yes, it is true that the Jews are God’s chosen people, and Jesus came to this world through their blood-line. However, if you’ll remember from a previous lesson, there were several other ethnic groups included in His family lineage. As the passage below indicates, His intent all along was to include people from every nation in His family.

***John 10:14-16 (ESV)***

***I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep. And I have other sheep that are not of this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd.***

Prejudice comes in many shapes and sizes: the intellectuals versus the uneducated, the haves versus the have nots, blacks versus whites, one tribe or ethnic group versus another. But in Bible times, the great dividing wall of hostility was between the Jews and all other races – the Gentiles. As a case in point, look at Saul who was a proud Jew, an educated man, an expert of the Old Testament, and a bigot. He was raised to be one. And isn’t it true that, generally speaking, our upbringing will shape the way we treat other people?

But God has a sense of humor, and He delights in humbling the proud. So He assigned Saul, the persecutor of Christians, to become Paul the evangelist to the Gentiles. When God floods our hearts with His love and peace, reconciliation between enemies is just one of the fringe benefits, and, as evident by Paul’s writing, the His Spirit is at work.

***Romans 12:5 (ESV)***

***So we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another.***

***Revelation 5:9-10 (ESV)***

***And they sang a new song, saying, “Worthy are you to take the scroll and to open its seals, for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation, and you have made them a kingdom and priests to our God, and they shall reign on the earth.”***

My pastor has been preaching through the book of Luke, and I always take notes so that I can spend some time digesting all that the Lord wants to teach me through this godly shepherd. The Lord is so good this way. It just so happens that as I was preparing to write this lesson, we were studying Luke, chapter nine. The Holy Spirit has been teaching me a lot about the arrogance of racism as we look at the disciple’s response to “outsiders.”

Repeatedly, Jesus demonstrated racial reconciliation before His disciples, although it took them a while to catch on. For instance, in Luke nine, when the Samaritans, whom they hated anyway, refused Jesus, it was James and His brother John (nicknamed The Sons of Thunder) who were only too happy to retaliate. They ask the Lord if He wanted them to add lightning to their repertoire of thunder and annihilate the Samaritans. You see, the Jews and the Samaritans had a long history of animosity. The Jews had intermarried with Gentiles and so Samaritans were a mixed race.

Now perhaps the clearest lesson in racial reconciliation, is seen when Jesus and His disciples went to Samaria. (John 4:3-26) While the disciples went there to get food, Jesus, as noted in the last lesson, Jesus had a completely different agenda. In light of the deeply embedded animosity between the Jews and the Samaritans, imagine the disciples shock when they found Jesus speaking to the woman at the well. It was considered taboo, even scandalous, for Jesus to even speak to her because Samaritans were considered to be “unclean.” Furthermore, to keep from becoming *unclean*, a devote Jew would normally walk seventy miles out of the way to stay out of Samaria! And yet, Jesus purposely went to there to find her, and change both her identity and her destiny. But that is not all. This despised woman from this despised place had the great honor of being the first person to whom Jesus revealed His true identity as the Christ… the long awaited Savior of the world.

Based on the fact that it was John who told us this story, I think it is safe to say the Lord had taken the “thunder” of hatred out of John and replaced it with love. John wrote more about God’s love for the world than any other gospel writer. Moreover, when John was much older and wiser, he received the Revelation. What the Lord Jesus showed him was one big, beautiful, multi-racial family, with no divisions, schisms or isms what so ever.

***Revelation 7:9-10 (ESV)***

***After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands, and crying out with a loud voice, “Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!***

Luke, the only Gentile writer of the Bible, wrote the scope of our mission in Acts 1:8. Jesus told them, “You *will be* My witness’ in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and to the uttermost parts of the World.”

The branches of God’s family tree include all people groups. He purchased us and grafted us in to His family through the Tree of Life. (The one cut down to make a cross.) The peace treaty that binds us together was signed in His blood. We are not just one nation under God. We are One holy nation *in God*. (1 Peter 2:5-9; Isaiah 56:3-7) So, there you have it…. The divine mystery. It’s no longer hidden, except to those who are so blinded by sin that they refuse to see. If we are honest, and call racism what it really is without sugarcoating it – it is sin. It’s, ugly, vile, Spirit quenching sin and God hates it! And sure, it is found in all levels of society, but it ought not be accepted or condoned with in the body of Christ.

**DIGGING DEEPER: Read the following passages and make notes of any insights and personal applications.**

* Luke 8:1-4, 9:28-56; John 4:3-42, 10:16, 11:50-51, 13:1-35, 17:11-23; 1 John 4:7-21, 5:1-2; Acts 13:46-48, 26:1-23; Isaiah 49:6, 56:3-7; Psalms 98:2

**Red and Yellow, Black and White**

***Colossians 3:11-15 (ESV)***

***Here there is not Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free; but Christ is all, and in all. Put on then, as God’s chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful.***

I grew up in Memphis, Tennessee during a time when the United States, and especially in the south, was divided by racism. As ridiculous as it seems now to my generation, people built walls of segregation in order to keep others in - or keep them out. How could anyone think God would approve of this?

In 1968 I was in kindergarten and oblivious to the fires of hate that ultimately led to the assignation of Dr. Martin Luther King in our home town. My husband Art was in the second grade at the time, and he remembers the National Guard tanks coming down his street under the guise of “keeping the peace.” One of the few memories I have from my first year in school, was running hand in hand with my friend to the playground. His skin was brown and mine was lily white and we did not know we were different. We were color blind…and that was a good thing.

By the time I started the fourth grade, the powers that be though it would be a good idea to integrate our public school system. Because we were going to be bussed to a school on the other side of town, some of the churches formed a school called; “Citizens Against Bussing School.” To make a long story short, I missed the forth-grade, and spent the fifth-through-the-ninth grade in a private church school where, instead of being taught, I worked on packets and then when outside to play. This void in the formative years of my education was coupled by the fact that I did not wear the glasses that were prescribed to me in the first grade. I was twenty-four years old when I realized how blind I had been, and I’ve been wearing glasses ever since. Any educator knows how important and foundational these years are to a child’s education. And so now you know the root cause of my “shameful secret.” To be brutally honest, my own insecurities became a justification for a sinful prejudice against those who were well educated. As I said before, this ugly sin comes in many shapes and sizes.

**DIGGING DEEPER: Read the following passages and make notes of any insights and personal applications.**

* John 4:3-42, 11:50-52, 17:11; Luke 18:9-14; Acts 10:34-48, 22:21; Romans 2:11, 11:1-36; Ephesians 3:1,13, 6:19-20; Colossians 1:25-27; Hebrews 3:6; Romans 10:9-16;

1 Corinthians 2:9-16; 2 Corinthians 6:14-18; 1 Peter 2:5-16; Isaiah 28:16

With all that being said, this only magnifies the beauty of the gospel that in Christ, the walls that divide us are obliterated. Although we come from many different cultures and we don’t speak the same language, we are all washed in the blood of Jesus and His love transcends all our differences. And, as we learned in the lesson entitled Signs of Life, love is the one tangible mark that identifies us as a child of God.

Now, can you think of anything the world has to offer, that can change animosity and hatred into love and peace? If there were such a thing, how much do you think people would pay to have it? It would be priceless - would it not? The only real hope for peace on earth and good will toward mankind is to be reconciled to God through Jesus …. For He Himself is our Peace. When we are at peace with God in Christ, this ushers in the possibility of peace, healing and reconciliation with others. Oh, how this world could use some healing! Besides that, isn’t our ministry one of reconciliation? (2 Corinthians 5:17-20)

I learned a little song in Sunday school. Perhaps you know it; it’s called “Jesus loves the little children.” And it goes like this: “Jesus loves the little children, all the children of the world. Red and yellow black and white, they are precious in His sight, Jesus loves the little children of the world.” The song was inspired by Matthew 19:14 and was written to the tune of a Civil War song. Ironic isn’t it?

I love to hear my granddaughters sing it. They are only two and three years-old, but my prayer for them is that the profound theology found in that song will be imbedded deep within their hearts. And I know it will because their parents and grandparents have been changed by the “gospel of peace,” as Paul called it, and this gospel makes us color blind. And thankfully, this is one sin that we have not handed down to our children.

**WORD SEARCH: From Strong’s Concordance**

* **Nation** Strong’s #1484 The Greek word Ethnos: - *a race, i.e. a tribe; specifically, a foreign (non-Jewish) one, Gentile, nation, people.* (See Acts 2:5, 10:35; 1 Peter 2:9-11; Revelation 5:8-9, 7:9; Matthew 28:19)
* **Family** Strong’s # 3965 The Greek word Patria:- *paternal descent i.e. a group of families or a whole race (nation) family, kindred, linage.* (This is the only time this word is used for family in Ephesians 3:15.)
* **House** Strong’s # 3609 The Greek word Oikeios: - *domestic, i.e. a relative, adherent: - those of his own household.* (Eph. 2:19)
* **House** Strong’s #1004 The Hebrew word Bayith: - *a house, especially Family: - court, daughter, home born, inside, palace, steward+ tablet, temple within.* (Psalms 45)
* **Church** Strong’s # 1577 The Greek word Ekklesia: - *a calling out of, community of members on earth or saints in heaven or both, assembly, church.* (Matthew 16:18; Acts 2:47; 1 Timothy 3:5-16; Ephesians 5:23-32; Revelation 22:16)

**Built Together**

Note, if you will, that both the Hebrew and Greek words for *house* beautifully describe the church. But the Hebrew word for house is even more descriptive. It means, in part, a family (like a royal court) a door, or a steward. But the most interesting descriptions for house are: *a palace*, a *temple and a daughter?* The two Greek words for house or household both imply not only a dwelling or residence, but also a family. This makes sense because when we think of home, don’t we think of the people we love? Our family *is* our home. Curiously enough, the word family is used just once in the New Testament and it is right there in Ephesians 3:14.

***Ephesians 3:14-15 (ESV)***

***For this reason, I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named.***

What’s in a name? Well, just as each name of God reveals something about His character and nature, so do the specific names given to His family. For instance, we are called Saints, Disciples, Christians, the Elect, the Chosen, the House of God, the Temple of God, The building and Dwelling of God, the Body of Christ, Living Stones, A Kingdom, A Holy Priests hood, and the Bride of Christ. But when we finally arrive at our eternal home in heaven, we’ll be called the Wife of the Lamb. Recently, while reading through the Chronical Bible, I came to the account of the building of Solomon’s temple. Three things stood out to me. Number one was how specific and meticulous the instructions were that God gave for its construction. Number two was that non-Jews took part in the building of it, and number three was that this temple was to be a place for *His Name*. (1 Kings 5:1-8 and 1 Chronicles) Now I don’t want to stretch the interpretation too far, but here is the point I am trying to make. As we are about to see, every individual, from every race and people group who are part in God’s family, need to be equipped in the work of the ministry to *build God’s family*. No one is excluded!

Now, with all this information, let’s paint a Biblical family portrait. The house the Lord is building, through local communities of believers, is a family. This family is functional because the love of Christ not only binds us together and it will keep us together forever. God’s family is made up of people from every nation. Although some are already home in heaven. The gates of hell will not prevail against it, and it will still be standing when the storms of this life are over for the foundation on which it was built is the Lord Jesus Christ - the Rock of Ages. As Randy Alcorn so beautifully describe in his book The Treasure Principle (page 48) he said:

When the Kings wedding day comes, the universe will screech to a halt (Revelation 19:7-9). Nothing else will be on heaven’s calendar. The Groom from Nazareth and His beloved bride will take the center stage. Every day of our lives we’re traveling toward that wedding – our wedding! It’s closer today than it was yesterday. Our Bridegroom, the Carpenter, is building a place for us in heaven. Everything we send on ahead will be waiting there for us. It’s our gift to Him, but in His Generosity He will give those treasures back to us. Jesus is a builder by trade. He’s also omniscient and omnipotent, qualities that come in handy on a building project! Don’t you think that the home He’s been building for us the last two thousand years is something incredible? Paradoxically, our home is a place we’ve never been. But it’s the place we were made for, the place made for us. If we would let this really sink in, it would forever change the way we think and live. We would stop laying up treasures in our earthly hotel rooms and start sending more ahead to our true home.

**DIGGING DEEPER: Read the following passages and make notes of any insights and personal applications.**

* John 14:2-23, 15:4-10; 1 John 2:6-14, 3:17-24, 4:12-16, 2 John 2; Psalms 90:1, 91:1; Philippians 3:20-21

# *Hebrews 2:10-13 (NIV)*

***In bringing many sons and daughters to glory, it was fitting that God, for whom and through whom everything exists, should make the pioneer of their salvation perfect through what he suffered. Both the one who makes people holy and those who are made holy are of the same family. So Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers and sisters. He says, “I will declare your name to my brothers and sisters; in the assembly I will sing your praises.” And again, “I will put my trust in him.” And again he says, “Here am I, and the children God has given me.”***

* Where you raised in a family that brought you up to love all people or one that fostered bigotry? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* Be honest, is there a certain people group that you tend to look down on or stay away from? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* If so, what is the reason that you feel this way? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* Do you welcome people from other cultures into your home? If so, list them here and how you came about developing these relationships. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

***Galatians 3:26-28 (ESV)***

***For in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ’s, then you are Abraham’s offspring, heirs according to promise.***

**He Gave Gifts to His Family**

***Ephesians 4:1-16 (ESV)***

***I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call—one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all. But grace was given to each one of us according to the measure of Christ’s gift. Therefore, it says, “When he ascended on high he led a host of captives,***  
***and he gave gifts to men.***

***(In saying, “He ascended,” what does it mean but that he had also descended into the lower regions, the earth? He who descended is the one who also ascended far above all the heavens, that he might fill all things.) And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.***

Finally, in this last section, we have come to a turning point in the book of Ephesians. The first three chapters of Ephesians primarily address doctrine, and now in the last three chapters we will see how to apply these truths practically. So now, from Ephesians chapter four, let’s this of this next part as “body building” or “church building.” And hopefully, we will discover how God has gifted each of us for our part in His body building. But first we must clear up some misconceptions. Do you believe that there a division between the secular life and the spiritual life? More importantly, does the Bible make this distinction? Well, we are about to find out.

Imagine if you will, a baby girl was given a gift on the day she was born. Her benefactor was a wealthy distant relative. Her parents never opened the gift; they simply placed it into a safety deposit box. As the child grew, no one knew what was in the box except the giver who had long since passed away. The gift was never opened. As the years went on, the parents forgot about the box and the child never knew she had a gift. Although the girl and her family had many financial needs, yet it never crossed their mind to open the gift in the safety deposit box. And yet the gift in that box contained an abundance of wealth to meet all the needs of this family. In fact, it was enough to bless her entire family for generations to come! Regrettably, she never knew that she had such a value gift!

The point to this little parable is this: When a person is born again into God’s family, they have been endowed with valuable spiritual gifts. And like the girl I the story, we could live our entire Christian life, and never even open them. Furthermore, the entire family of God will be cheated out of the blessings that would have come to them through *you.* This is why you were added to the family of God, so that you could bear much fruit. But it is just not going to happen if we are disconnected from His church - local communities of Faith. (In next week’s lesson, we will take a closer look at how this works.) In Robert Colman’s book, The Masters Plan of Evangelism, he speaks of the wisdom of God in putting us together as the Church. He says:

“Really the whole problem of giving personal care to every believer is only resolved in a thorough understanding of the nature and mission of the church. It is important here to observe that the emergence of the church principle around Jesus, whereby one believer was brought into fellowship with all others, was the practice in a larger dimension of the same thing that he was doing with the Twelve. Actually it was the church that was the means of following up with all those who followed him. That is, the group of believers became the body of Christ, and as such ministered to each other individually and collectively. Every member of the community of had a part to fulfill in this ministry. But this they could only do as they themselves were trained and inspired. As long as Jesus was with them in the flesh, he was the Leader, but thereafter, it was necessary for those in the church to assume this leadership. Again this meant that Jesus had to train them to do it, which involved his own constant personal association with a few chosen men.”

Okay, so we have established that there is no such thing as a layperson. God does not have “super saints.” Moreover, God can, and does, use all of us to do the work of ministry to the church. Notice I did not say *in* the church, but *to* the church. There is a difference. But the issue at hand is that in order to participate in this work, we must be part of a local community of believers and within these communities there is to be an orderly administration of authority, accountability and submission to one another. This is evident by numerous passages such as the entire book of Titus, Ephesians 5:18-21 and 1 Timothy chapters two and three, just to name a few. Otherwise there can be no order, no communion of the Spirit or accountability to the rest of the body of Christ. Although the church is not a building or organization, it is however a living organism. We can’t disconnect from the body and remain connected to Christ who is the head.

In his message entitled, *The Comma that Caused a Disciple-making Coma in Christians!* Rev. Wade Trimmer gives a thought provoking explanation. He says:

No, I am not trying to be cute with my play on the words “comma” and “coma.” The stark reality is the translator’s insertion of the commas in Ephesians 4:12, have literally resulted in the majority of Christians going into a spiritual coma as far as doing ministry is concerned.

Our English word, “coma” is derived from the Greek word “koma,” meaning deep sleep. Medically this is a state of extreme unresponsiveness to outward stimuli. Spiritually, it’s an unresponsiveness to Jesus’ assignment based primarily upon being taught that they were only members of the church whose responsibility was to help those called to the ministry.

What prompted the King James translators to insert these three commas in this sentence?  It was not because the Greek text mandated commas here. The original Greek text did not use any punctuation marks. They did so, based upon the truth that the Church as a whole had been functioning for 1700 years on a misunderstanding of who was responsible for doing the work of the ministry.

Taking the implications of Ephesians 4:7 into our interpretation, i.e.  that every believer is gifted and contributes to the building up of the body, then the five gifted persons — apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, teachers — are given the task of equipping every member of the church to do the work of ministry or service. (The word translated ministry is the word most often used for serving and service.)

The three commas created two classes of persons in the church, the clergy and the laity, the minister and the members. It divided life into the sacred and the secular. Institutional church work on Sunday was considered sacred and laymen’s work during the week was labeled secular. It created two callings a higher verses a lower calling, or a sacred verses a secular calling.

We know from the book of Acts as well as the history of the first 200 year of the church, that it was growing and multiplying exponentially. Then something happen. As is always the case, Satan has a strategy to counteract any advance in the Kingdom of God. The plan was set in motion when Constantine, the first Roman Emperor *to profess* Christianity, began a massive building program. He erected church buildings on the site of every important location in Christendom. What looked like a very noble cause became the very instrument in the hands of evil one to stop the multiplication. The tragic effect of this was that all of the believers stopped going everywhere to tell a person. Now they came into these extravagant buildings to sit and hear a person (priests and only well-educated speakers.) They were told, in essence, you are not important or smart or powerful enough to be used of God so they stopped making disciples. The workforce was no longer being equipped to “go and tell-a-person.” And so they were “benched” or “pewed,” if you will. In other words, the majority of people who made up the church were put out of co-mission.

If you were to ask most Christians what the Great Commission is, they would most likely say evangelism. But is that what Jesus told us to do? He did not say, “Some of you go evangelize the nations.”  He did not say, “Some of you go make converts.” He did *not s*ay: “Go and build buildings.” He said, “Go and turn people into disciples.” It was never His intent, that just a few in the body of Christ would enter His labor force while everyone else sat on their hands and watched them work! But, if we are honest, isn’t that what we have done? Furthermore, is it really realistic to think a handful of foreign missionaries can make disciples of all nations? Every believer from every ethnic group must be equipped and mobilized with the strategy of Jesus. It begins in our own Jerusalem, but, if we follow His plan, from our home base we reach the world. (Acts 1:8)

But let’s take for a moment to talk about evangelism. When we evangelize we add converts, however, to make disciples, is to multiply. Therefore, you can evangelize, but this does not mean you have obeyed the Great Commission. And yet, you will never be a true disciple maker without evangelizing *with* your disciples. (Acts 14:21, 28) He did not say make *a* disciple. He said, “Go” (present participle) meaning, as you go, where ever you go in your everyday life… make disciples of *all* nations. You do this with someone. And furthermore, we have not made disciples unless the ones we disciple reproduce.

This is how it works. Hypothetically speaking, let’s say that you could win one person to the Lord every day for 16 years; that equals 5846 souls. But, if you were to disciple only two people per year and they do the same, in 16 years you could impact 65,536 souls. Impressive isn’t it? But how many people have this kind of impact? Therefore, every believer who claims to follow Christ must carefully consider two questions. Number one is “Who was Jesus commanding when He said make disciples?” And number two is "If I am a Christian, does this command apply to me?”

It is time for the church of the Lord Jesus Christ to leave the building with the good news and build “the Church” by making disciples who will reproduce! Kingdom building - is people building, there is no other plan - this is the mission!

***1 Corinthians 12:4-14 (HCSB)***

***Now there are different gifts, but the same Spirit. There are different ministries, but the same LORD. And there are different activities, but the same God is active IN EVERYONE and EVERYTHING. A manifestation of the Spirit is given to each person to produce what is beneficial: to one is given a message of wisdom through the Spirit, to another, a message of knowledge by the Spirit, to another, faith by the same Spirit, to another, prophecy, to another, distinguishing between the spirits, to another different kinds of languages, to another, interpretation of languages. But one and the same Spirit is active in all these, distributing to each one as He wills. But one and the same Spirit is active in all these, distributing to each one as He will.For as the body is one and has many parts, and all the parts of that body, though many, are one body -- so also is Christ. For we are all baptized by one Spirit into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, weather slave or free—and we are all made to drink of one Spirit. So the body is not one part but many.***

Now I hate to disappoint you but we will not be looking at each individual gift. However, for those of you who are curious, here are just a couple of resources that offer test you can take to discover your spiritual gifts and they are:

http://www.lifeway.com/lwc/files/lwcf\_mycs\_030526\_spiritual\_gifts\_survey.pdf www.spiritualgiftstest.com

***1 Peter 4:8-11***

***Above all, keep your love for one another at full strength, since love covers a multitude of sins. 9 be hospitable to one another without complaining. As each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.11 Whoever speaks, is to do so as one who is speaking the utterances of God; whoever serves is to do so as one who is serving; so that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belongs the glory and the dominion for ever and ever. Amen.***

In John Macarthur’s commentary on 1 Peter 4:10 he said:

“*A special gift or spiritual gift is a graciously given supernaturally designed ability granted to every believer by the Holy Spirit by which the Holy Spirit ministers to the body of Christ. A spiritual gift cannot be earned, pursued, or worked up. It is merely received through the grace of God. (1 Cor. 12:4, 7, 11, 18) Each believer has one specific gift, often a combination of various categories of gifts blended together uniquely for each Christian (Roman 12:3-8; 1 Cor. 12:7-10)” Spiritual gifts were used not for the exaltation of the person with the gift, but in loving concern for the benefit of others in the church (Romans 5:5; 1 Cor.12:7; 13:2) “A steward is responsible for another’s resources. A Christian does not own his gifts, but God has given him gifts to manage for the church and His glory. “*

Spiritual gifts are not for us. In facts, they are given to you to serve the body of Christ, but to do this takes humility. And “Humility,” someone has said, “is not thinking less of yourself, it’s not thinking of yourself at all!” In our lesson titled “Who are Your Yous?” we talk about the self-centered life-style or Satan’s life-style. This is called the outside *in* lifestyle or the lifestyle that is all about *me*. This person can never be happy or get enough. Everything she gets is for self-use and in the end, this life implodes into self. This is the only life a sinner can live. It is impossible to follow Jesus and live the self-centered life!

To follow Jesus example, we live in inside *out* lifestyle. What do we mean? A person who lives inside out realizes that everything they have belongs to the Lord. For this reason, everything in our life, time, energy, wisdom, and resources are used for the growth and benefit of *others*. Do you know the primary difference in merely doing Bible studies and disciple making? Most people study to benefit themselves, but a disciple maker studies and gathers truth in order to give it away to others! And when we follow Jesus strategy, His Truth is multiplied to a multitude of others. This kind of lifestyle explodes the gospel all over the world.

And furthermore, whether it is speaking or serving, if it’s not done in the Spirit of love, it is useless! (Romans 5:5; 1 Corinthians 13:1-7)

Even though the gifts are for others, we will find our greatest joy in being used as Jesus’ vessel to meet the needs of others. It is through our discipling relationships that we learn what our gifts are and what to do with them. As you see others being built up through your gifts, you experience the joy of the Lord.

***Romans 12:4-9 (HCSB)***

***Now as we have many parts in one body, and all the parts do not have the same function. In the same way we who are many are one body of Christ and individually members of one another. According to the grace given to us, we have different gifts: If prophecy, use it according to the standard of faith; if service, in service; if teaching, in teaching; if exhorting, in exhortation; giving, with generosity; leading, with diligence; showing mercy, with cheerfulness.***

**DIGGING DEEPER: Read the following passages and make notes of any insights and personal applications.**

* Luke 9:22-23, 26-27, 14:25-35; Gal. 2:20; John 13:12-17, 34-35; Mark 10:44-45; Romans 12:9-16

***Luke 22:24-27 (HSV)***

***A dispute also arose among them, as to which of them was to be regarded as the greatest. And he said to them, “The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them, and those in authority over them are called benefactors. But not so with you. Rather, let the greatest among you become as the youngest, and the leader as one who serves. For who is the greater, one who reclines at table or one who serves? Is it not the one who reclines at table? But I am among you as the one who serves.***

***Philippians 2:1-8 (ESV)***

***So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy, complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.***

***Mark 10:44-45 (HCSB)***

***And whoever wants to be first among you must be a slave to all. 45 For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and give his life-a ransom for many.***

***Colossians 1:24-29 (ESV)***

***Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I am filling up what is lacking in Christ’s afflictions for the sake of his body, that is, the church, of which I became a minister according to the stewardship from God that was given to me for you, to make the word of God fully known, the mystery hidden for ages and generations but now revealed to his saints. To them God chose to make known how great among the Gentiles are the riches of the glory of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ. For this I toil, struggling with all his energy that he powerfully works within me.***

* Now it is your turn. In the following list of passages, we see two categories of gifts and they are: speaking and serving. As you read through this list, see if you can determine what verses are talking about serving gifts and which ones are speaking gifts and list them below. Ephesians 2:10, 20-21, 4:11-16, 25, 5:18-25, 11:18-20; 1 Corinthians 2:1-15, 3:1-16, 4:14-19, 12:4-18, 14:1-5,19; 2 Corinthians 3:2-9, 4:7; Philippians 2:13-25, 3:3, 4:13-19; 1 Peter 4:11; Colossians 1:9-11, 16, 27-29; Romans 3:2; Acts 7:38; James 2:14-22
* Speaking gifts: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* Serving gifts: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

To wrap up this week’s lesson, I would like to end with a song. It was written in 1866 by Samuel J. Stone. In it he beautifully describes the life of the church and Her final victory over the world and death.

**The Church’s One Foundation**

***1 Corinthians 3:11***

***“For no man can lay a foundation other than the one which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.”***

*The Church’s one foundation is Jesus Christ her LORD She is His new creation by water and the word.*

*From heaven He came and sought her to be His Holy Bride, with His own blood He bought her and for her life He died.*

*Elect from every nation yet one o’er all the earth. Her charter of Salvation, One LORD, One Faith, one birth, one Holy Name she blesses, partakes one Holy food, and to one Hope she presses with every grace endues.*

*Mid toil and tribulation and tumult of her war, she waits the consummation of peace forevermore till, with the vision glorious her longing eyes are blest and the great Church victorious shall be the Church at rest.*