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**"The Church is where we are reminded that we belong  
not because we're useful, but because we're loved."**

[Tish Harrison Warren]

## ENGAGE & CONNECT

What's something your 'kingdom heart' gets excited about when you think of being part of God's bigger story? This can be anything that gets you excited, motivated, or inspired!

## BEGIN WITH PRAYER

Spend a moment praying this passage, beginning your time together in humility and gratitude!

*"But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession,  
that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light."*

[1 Peter 2:9]

## BIG IDEA

Why should we "go" to church? To meet with God who is present as His body gathers; to become who I am called to be by being edified; to participate in God's work of building a Kingdom and making a family!

## PASSAGE & DISCUSSION

1. In the sermon we heard, *"The Holy Spirit does not fully dwell in any one of us; He dwells fully in all of us."* What is your response to this statement? Does it align with or challenge what you were taught about the Holy Spirit?

### Ephesians 2:18-22

2. What does Paul say about access to the Father? Who makes that possible?
3. What metaphors does Paul use to describe the church? What do they signify to us?
4. According to this passage, what is the Holy Spirit's role in the church?
5. What is the significance of the Holy Spirit creating a "new community" rather than isolated individuals? How does this challenge your way of thinking about the church?
6. How does understanding the church as "God's dwelling place" shift how we should view our church worship gatherings?
7. In what ways have you approached church more like a consumer than a living stone being built into something greater? This is a good opportunity to go first!

8. What would it look like for you to live out your identity as a “citizen,” “family member,” and “living stone” in the church more fully in the coming weeks?
9. How can our group practically honor the Holy Spirit’s presence among us and remove barriers to His work when we gather?

## STEP OF OBEDIENCE

Paul unveiled a powerful vision of the church—as a living, Spirit-filled community where God's presence is experienced, His people are built up, and His purposes unfold. The church is the [dwelling place of God by the Spirit](#), formed from once-divided people into a holy family and temple. This challenges us to move from casual attendance to Spirit-led participation, from isolation to deep connection, and from religious duty to sacred expectancy.

*As you consider your next step, reflect on:* 1) What part of your current view of church most needs to be reshaped by this passage? 2) Are you building with the Spirit or just attending services?

## Possible Next Steps of Faith

1. Pray before each small group or church gathering: “Holy Spirit, help me to expect and experience your presence today.”
2. Commit to removing one barrier (i.e. rushing, disengagement, bitterness) that hinders your experience of the Spirit with God’s people.

## PRAYER FOCUS

### Together in His Work

Today, let’s prayerfully reflect on seeing church not as a place we attend, but a people we *belong to and build with*, as God’s family on mission.

- Ask everyone to quietly reflect on this question: *“God is building His kingdom and His family. What is one small way He might be inviting you to participate?”*
- Then, invite each person to say a short sentence prayer, filling in this prompt: “Lord, use me to help build your kingdom by \_\_\_\_.” OR “Lord, help me love your family by \_\_\_\_.”
  - Let the group go popcorn-style—brief, spontaneous prayers without needing to go in order. Encourage simple and honest responses. Anyone can pass if they prefer.
- End with a prayer spoken aloud together:
  - *“God, thank you for calling us into your family.  
Thank you for giving us a part in your work.  
Build your kingdom through us.  
Grow your family with love.  
Use our church for your glory.  
We are yours. Amen.”*

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- [Ephesians Ch. 2 Commentary](#) & [The Mystery of the Gospel](#)
  - Use these for background and encouragement before your group gathers.
- [I Believe In the Holy Spirit](#)
  - This would be a good resource to use after your group gathers.