

Small Group Guide



Key Takeaways

- Salvation is bigger than personal forgiveness. As the sermon stated, Jesus died "to reconcile people to God and to create a new spirit-filled humanity through which he would bring blessing in life and restoration to his whole creation."
- In Christ, we are not only brought near to God but near to one another. The two cannot be separated.
- Loneliness is not weakness. It is a godly longing for the community we were designed to live in.
- Community is costly. Our individualistic culture, our sin, and dark spiritual forces all work against the kind of family God calls us to build.
- The church is not an event to attend. It is a people to belong to.
- The central question shifts from "Who am I in Christ?" to "Who are we in Christ together?"

Discussion Questions

1. Think about a time in your life when you felt genuinely known and cared for by a group of people. What made that experience meaningful? What made it difficult to sustain?
2. Read Ephesians 2:11-15. Before Christ, the Gentiles were described as separated, excluded, and without hope. What does it mean to you personally that Christ brought those who were "far away" near? What were you far from, beyond just God?
3. The sermon pointed out that when Adam and Eve sinned in Genesis 3, their relationship with God broke down and their relationship with each other broke down at the same time. Why do you think we often focus on the first but overlook the second?
4. Colossians 1:19-20 describes God reconciling "all things" to himself through Christ. How does understanding salvation as the restoration of all things change the way you think about your faith, your relationships, and your role in the world?
5. The sermon offered two ways of summarizing the gospel. The first was: "Jesus died so that my sins could be forgiven, so that I could have a personal relationship with

God and go to heaven when I die." The second was: "Jesus died to reconcile people to God and to create a new spirit-filled humanity through which he would bring blessing in life and restoration to his whole creation." What does the second version include that the first leaves out? Does anything feel challenging about embracing the fuller picture?

6. The sermon described our culture as one that "consumes rather than blesses, dominates rather than serves, competes rather than cooperates, hides rather than reveals, divides based on anything other than Jesus." Where do you see these patterns showing up in your own life or in the church?
7. The sermon said that real relationships "expose our selfishness, our pride, our fears, our unforgiveness, our need for control." Has a relationship within the church ever revealed something in you that needed to change? What happened?
8. Is there a dividing wall of hostility in your life, whether within your local church or in the broader body of Christ, that you have been slow to address? What has kept you from tearing it down?
9. The sermon stated: "I cannot receive Christ while treating his people as optional." How does that land with you? Is there any way you have been treating the family of God as optional or as a service you consume?