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## Built To Be His Dwelling Place

People often say they have great admiration for Jesus Christ, but they also want very little to do with His Church. In today's text, the Apostle Paul shows us why this attitude is completely inconsistent with the reality of our salvation. In verses 11-18, he has explained that the blood of Jesus Christ as reconciled us both to each other as brothers and sisters and also to God. He now shows us the great implications of Christ's work for the Church.

## Ephesians 2:19-22

<sup>19</sup> So then you are no longer strangers and aliens,<sup>1</sup> but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, <sup>20</sup> built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, <sup>21</sup> in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. <sup>22</sup> In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by<sup>2</sup> the Spirit.

Paul teaches us that something dramatic has occurred in our lives as a result of becoming Christians. We were once alienated from God and His people, but now we are made into a new humanity. Paul uses three analogies to make His point: 1) the kingdom, 2) the family, and 3) the temple.

Paul says, first of all, that we are now citizens of His Kingdom. That means, of course, that we now have rights—to be protected and provided for and to receive justice within the community.

Then, he says, we also belong to God's family. That means we are cherished, loved, included, and valued.

Then, most gloriously, Paul teaches us that we are His dwelling place, His Temple. This is the most remarkable statement of all—that we would be the "living stones" (see I Peter 2:5) He selects to construct His own house. In this analogy, we notice that Paul refers to the foundation, the cornerstone, and the superstructure of the Temple. Each analogy is important to His overall teaching. The foundation of the Church is the teaching of the apostles and prophets, the cornerstone, which sets the angles for the entire Church, is none other than Jesus Christ, and the superstructure is ourselves.

## **Discussion Questions**

1. What does Paul mean by "strangers and aliens?"

2. What benefits do we receive by becoming "citizens" in God's Kingdom?

3	3. What benefits do we receive by becoming " members of the household of God?"
2	4. Why is it important that we build our livesour beliefs and practiceson the foundation of the apostles and prophets?
5	5. What does Paul mean when he says that Christ is the "cornerstone" of the temple?
6	6. If we, as God's people, are His dwelling place, what sort of lives ought we to live? Why?
	Going Deeper
	1. In light of Ephesians 2:19-22, how do your attitudes about the Church need to change?
	2. How does your practical commitment to the church need to be strengthened?