



Session 5: Identity and Community

READ

Ephesians 1-3

CONNECT

Think of a group you belong to, maybe a club, a society, or even your country.

1. What privileges does your membership give you?
2. What responsibilities do you have because you are a member?

WATCH

As you watch the video, fill in the following:

A. Background to the Book of Ephesians¹

Who was Paul's secondary audience for the letter?

"Ephesians is Paul's only canonical letter in which the salutation is followed by _____."

B. Citizenship in the Kingdom of God

The "kingdom of God" is the time when God's kingdom will be manifested where?

What does the video say about the Old Testament covenants?

"Paul's focus on _____ in terms of citizenship and covenants indicated that Paul was speaking of [it] as God's kingdom."

How does Pastor Johnson Oni summarize Paul's explanation of what it means to be a citizen of God's kingdom?

C. The Church as the Temple (Ephesians 2:19-22)

What was the goal of this building?

The Jews had received preferential treatment from God for so long that they had begun to think what?

What does this metaphor of the church mean for us today?

¹ If you have questions about Paul's authorship of Ephesians, watch the section *Authorship* (minutes 3:55 - 7:26) in the Thirdmill video *Paul's Prison Epistles – Lesson 3: "Paul and the Ephesians."*

DISCUSS

1. What is one thing you want to remember from the video?
2. According to the video and your reading of the book of Ephesians:
 - a. What benefits come from being citizens of the kingdom of God?
 - b. What responsibilities do we have towards our King?
3. How can the metaphor of the Temple guide our relationships with other believers?
4. For personal reflection:
 - a. What relationship do you need to apply this to?
 - b. Bring this to God in prayer.
 - c. After you pray about this, what specific action can you take this week to better align that relationship with what you have seen in Ephesians?

APPLY

1. In Ephesians, Paul draws his readers' attention to God's kingdom in a variety of ways. For example, he refers to them as "citizens." He associates their spiritual warfare with required military service and their inheritance as followers of Christ with God's kingdom, and he speaks of himself as an ambassador, which was an official governmental position. Compare and contrast the political government you live under to that of a monarchy in which the monarch has full and absolute political power.
 - a. In what ways is it similar?
 - b. In what ways is it different?
 - c. How do these similarities and differences help or hinder you from understanding what it means to be a citizen of God's kingdom?
2. Read Ephesians 2:1-10. What similarities do you see between your personal experience and Paul's description of the process of a person's citizenship being transferred from the kingdom of darkness to the kingdom of light?

CHALLENGE

Think of friends, relatives, or co-workers who are still "separated from Christ...having no hope and without God in the world" (Ephesians 2:12).

1. What part of your experience and relationship with God could you use as a bridge to introduce Christ into a conversation?
2. Ask God to prepare their hearts, open their eyes, and give you the opportunity to share this with them.