



September 6, 2015
Elevation | 10:45 am
Pastor Eric Wakeling

Better Together Ephesians 1:1-2

What is the significance of this letter for the people of Ephesus?

“To the saints who are at Ephesus and who are faithful in Christ Jesus.” Ephesians 1:1b

Cultural Background of Ephesus and Asia Minor

- Ephesus was the first and greatest metropolis of Asia
- Important Biblical People in Ephesus
 - Timothy was the pastor of Ephesus.
 - Paul was in Ephesus for three years, longest place on of any of his journeys.
 - Priscilla and Aquila were here on Paul’s second missionary journey. Acts 18:18-21
 - Apollos preached here and was taught by Priscilla and Aquila. Acts 18:24-28
 - John was the pastor of Ephesus.
 - Jesus commissioned John to care for His mother, Mary, so many people believe that Mary was here as well.
- Primary temple of Domitian was here. Emperor worship was bigger in Asia Minor than Italy.
- Wealthy city, luxury was present, potentially hundreds of brothels, 25% of the population were slaves - Timothy told them to be rich in good deeds.
- Worship of Greek gods was dominant in the culture
- Primary place of worship for Artemis - mother goddess, fertility, the hunt, wild animals, etc.
- Acts 19:23-41

Paul and Ephesus

- Autumn of 52 - second missionary journey, ministered in synagogue - Acts 18:18-21
- 53-56 AD - third missionary journey, stayed two and a half years, leaving in spring of 56 - Acts 19:1-20:1
- Spring of 57 - Paul visited elders of Ephesus in Miletus - Acts 20:16-38

What is the significance of this letter for us today?

“So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God’s household.” Ephesians 2:19

- Following Jesus is designed to be in community. Body, building, temple, household, bride, etc.
 - Look at the list of verses on the Digging Deeper that show we are better together.
- You are part of a family now, God’s household, and this family loves you and needs you.

We are truly better together.

“And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ.” Ephesians 4:11-12

Digging Deeper

Better Together in the book of Ephesians:

- Family - 1:5
- All things are in Christ - 1:10
- Love for each other - 1:15
- The body, the church - 1:23
- "We" are his workmanship, "We" are created for good works - 2:10
- Unity and peace of Jew and Gentile - 2:14
- Fellow citizens - 2:19
- God's household - 2:19
- Building, temple, dwelling of God is all "we" - 2:21-22
- Fellow heirs, fellow members of body, fellow partakers of the promise - 3:6
- One body, one Spirit, one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father - 4:4-6
- Equipping the saints, building up the body of Christ - 4:12
- Unity of the faith - 4:13
- The proper working of each individual part causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love - 4:16
- Members of one another - 4:25
- Share with someone who has need - 4:28
- Edify one another - 4:29
- Be kind and forgive one another - 4:32
- Speaking to one another with songs - 5:19
- Be subject to one another - 5:21
- Pray for all the saints - 6:18

Discussion:

How is this lived out? What does this concept of being Better Together look like in your real, everyday life?

Next Steps:

1. **Grow Together by joining a LifeGroup.** LifeGroups are ongoing small group communities that gather together throughout the week to CONNECT in a smaller setting, GROW together in our faith, and REACH out together to our community. Come on Sunday, September 20 after the morning services to the LifeGroup Fair and find a LifeGroup that suits you! Learn more at calvarylife.org/lifegroups
2. **Serve Together.** Join us for the "Love Santa Ana" serve day on Saturday, September 19 at 8:00 am at the Pico-Lowell Neighborhood as we serve alongside ten other Santa Ana churches that are committed to showing the love of Jesus to at-risk neighborhoods. For more info, contact Matt at MDoan@calvarylife.org or 714.550.2378 or visit calvarylife.org/local
3. **Reach Together. Invite a friend to attend the Alpha Course with you.** Alpha is an 8-week course where you can come explore some of life's big questions over a relaxed time of dinner, learning and group discussion. The Alpha course meets on Wednesdays from September 9 - October 18 at 6:30 - 8:30pm in the Lobby. For more info, contact Matt Doan at mdoan@calvarylife.org or visit calvarylife.org/alpha

LifeGroup Discussion:

1. Describe a time when you wanted to do something alone, but you realized it was better to do it with other people.
2. How tempting is it for you to do things alone? Why do you think that is? Discuss your personality, history and talents that affect this for you.
3. Share what you believe your spiritual gifts and natural abilities are with the group. Have each person share and then discuss how your gifts can come together to make a greater impact together than you can separately.