



# The Church: Her Privilege, Design, and Influence

Ephesians 2:19-22

# Introduction: The Setting of Ephesus

- Ephesus: Home of the Temple of Artemis (one of the Seven Wonders)
- Massive center of pagan worship and imperial cults
- Religious influence shaped culture, economy, and identity
- Into this context, Paul explains the true nature of the Church

# I. The Church's Privileged Position (Eph. 2:19)

- Once strangers and aliens to God's covenant promises
- Separated from God by sin and the dividing wall (Eph. 2:14–18)
- Now fellow citizens and members of God's household
- Adopted into God's family through Christ
- No longer excluded — now fully accepted in Him

# From Exclusion to Inclusion

- Eph. 2:14–18 — Christ is our peace; He broke down the dividing wall
- 1 Cor. 12:13 — Baptized by one Spirit into one body
- Access to the Father through Christ by the Spirit
- Unity transcends ethnicity, background, and former idolatry

## II. The Church's Construction (Eph. 2:20–21)

### A. The Church's foundation: The Apostles and Prophets (v.20)

- **Apostles:** eyewitnesses to resurrected Christ, commissioned by Christ, given authority to perform signs and wonders, inspired to write the Scripture
- **Prophets:** spoke God's revealed Word to the early Church
- Foundation laid through inspired teaching and Scripture
- Foundation laid once — authority now is the Word of God

# II. The Church's Construction (Eph. 2:20–21)

## B. Christ the Cornerstone (Eph. 2:20b)

- Cornerstone: the essential stone aligning and supporting the structure
- Christ is the foundation stone of the Church
- Rejected by men but chosen by God (Psalm 118:22)
- The Church is unified, supported, and sustained by Christ
- All growth and strength flow from Him

# II. The Church's Construction (Eph. 2:20–21)

## C. The Church's Continual Expansion (Eph. 2:21)

- The whole building is being fitted together
- Growing into a holy temple in the Lord
- Ongoing, living construction — not a static structure
- Christ as Head over all things to the Church (Eph. 1:22–23)
- The Church cannot be stopped — God is building it

# III. The Church's Participation (Eph. 2:22)

- “You also are being built together...”
- Each believer is a living stone in God's dwelling
- Corporate indwelling of the Spirit among God's people
- Not a physical temple — a spiritual dwelling
- God's presence now resides in His redeemed people

# Old Testament Background of God's Dwelling

- 2 Chron. 7:1–3 — God's glory filled Solomon's Temple
- Ezekiel 10 — God's glory departed because of Israel's sin and idolatry
- Under the New Covenant, God dwells in His people
- The Spirit indwells believers individually and corporately

# How the Church Grows (Eph. 4:11–13)

- Christ gives leaders to equip the saints
  - For the work of service and building up the body
  - Growth toward unity of faith and knowledge of Christ
  - Maturity measured by conformity to Christ
- \*True growth is depth before breadth

# The Church's Influence in a Pagan World

- Distinct not by buildings but by spiritual character
- Conformity to Christ sets the Church apart
- Influence grows as believers mature in holiness
- The world sees something real and lasting
- False temples fall — Christ's Church endures

# A Warning from Revelation (Rev. 2:1–7)

- Commended for perseverance and doctrinal faithfulness
- But rebuked for leaving their first love (v.4)
- Call to remember, repent, and return (v.5)
- Promise to those who overcome (v.7)
- Orthodoxy must be joined with love for Christ

# Conclusion

- We are privileged members of God's household
- Built on apostolic truth with Christ as cornerstone
- Growing together into God's dwelling by the Spirit
- Our love for Christ must fuel our obedience
- The Church's lasting influence flows from her union with Him