

## LifeGroup Questions

Based on: Ephesians 2:1-11-3:13

June 23, 2019

### **Overview**

When I started looking up this passage in my Bible software the title “One in Christ” came up. In today’s passage, the Apostle Paul is addressing the unity that now exists between the Jews and the Gentiles. Throughout the Old Testament there was a large distinction between Jews and Gentiles. The Jews were considered God’s chosen people who had the promise of the Messiah. The Gentiles were basically anyone who wasn’t Jewish by birth. There are accounts of war after war between these two groups. Paul is stating that through the blood of Christ these two groups are now one. There is no distinction.

Today, in the church, we do not think in terms of Jews and Gentiles. The separation which can exist in a church can go far beyond just being Jew and Gentile. There can be political division, worship preferences, and racial division. Any characteristic which makes a person distinctive can become a cause of division in the church. We say we want a multicultural, multiethnic, diverse church, but what we really want is diversity defined by everyone still conforming to our preferred way of worship. We want diversity with everything still being the same.

I lived in Los Angeles for two years. Although I didn’t like living in such a large city, it was an opportunity for me to see immense diversity in the church. I could be in the lobby on any given Sunday and hear multiple languages being spoken. When I looked at the congregation from the stage it was a dim reflection of the book of Revelation where it is written that every tribe, tongue and nation will be before the throne. All churches should be a reflection of the community in which they reside. LA just happens to be a tremendously diverse city. The question we need to ask at First MB is, “Do we reflect our community?”

Diversity in the church means breaking down any barrier that divides us. It means looking past racial, political, or social economic boundaries that separate. It means realizing the unity we have in Christ. There is not going to be separation in heaven. We need to seek unity at the cost of our own wants and desires. Unity needs to take priority over our comfort level.

### **Bible Study:** Ephesians 2:1-11-3:13

1. In what ways can churches seek unity and cultural diversity at the same time?
2. Read Romans 10:11-13. How can focusing on Christ bring unity?

3. “He took sinful Jews and sinful Gentiles and through His cross made a ‘new man’—the church.”<sup>1</sup> Do you consider yourself to be one with other believers who don’t look, think, or have the same culture as you?
4. In Ephesians 2:14 the Apostle Paul is using the temple to describe unity in the church. There was a dividing wall around the temple in Jerusalem. What divides people today in the church?
5. In what ways have you seen division and reconciliation in the church?

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<sup>1</sup> Wiersbe, W. W. (1992). [\*Wiersbe's expository outlines on the New Testament\*](#) (p. 543). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.