

## MAIN POINT

*Paul called the believers in Ephesus to live in unity based on their common salvation in Jesus.*

## INTRODUCTION

What are some traits in other people that make it easy for you to get along with them? What are some traits that make it difficult for you to get along with another person? How easy or difficult do you find it to build relationships with those to whom you don't naturally connect?

There are some individuals we click with right away. We may share common interests, a similar sense of humor, or a like perspective on the world. However, there are also people that we won't connect with naturally. These relationships take work to push beyond awkward beginnings and build a true relationship. In the second half of Ephesians 2, Paul called the believers in Ephesus to do the hard work of pursuing unity together. This unity was not to be found merely in surface connections or even pursuit of relationship for relationship sake alone. True unity for the church in Ephesus—and for us—would only be found in the common bond of salvation through Jesus Christ.

## DISCUSSION

### > READ EPHESIANS 2:11-22.

What were some of the "dividing walls of hostility" between Jews and Gentiles in Paul's day?

What are some of the "dividing walls of hostility" between people of differing cultures, backgrounds, and ethnicities today? What are some problems that result from these dividing walls?

How has Christ destroyed hostility and made peace possible for all people (v. 14)?

How are Jews reconciled to God? What about Gentiles? Why did Jesus' death on the cross bring not only reconciliation between God and man, but also between different groups of people?

How did Paul describe Gentile Christians in verse 19? What does that tell us about our identity in Christ? How might we think about and treat people differently if we viewed all people as potential "members of God's household"?

How might striving for racial reconciliation in our community and city provide us with unique opportunities to share the gospel?

## APPLICATION

What barriers stand in the way of churches leading the charge in racial reconciliation? What could you do to overcome these barriers? What could we do as a group?