



# Finding Our Way with Racial Reconciliation

## Summary and Goal

The gospel of Jesus doesn't just "suggest" reconciliation; it is reconciliation. The human with God and the human with other humans. The church of Jesus Christ must lead the way in pursuing racial reconciliation as a demonstration of the gospel working its way among believers.

### **Main Passages**

Ephesians 2:11-22

### **Session Outline**

1. Christ Redefines Our Identity (Ephesians 2:11-13)
2. Christ the Peacemaker (Ephesians 2:14-17)
3. A Unified People for a Unified Purpose (Ephesians 2:18-22)

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### **Theological Theme**

Christ reconciles humanity to Himself and to one another.

### **Christ Connection**

Christ's blood is what unifies the people of God, regardless of ethnic background.

### **Missional Application**

Believers of all backgrounds share a common identity as "fellow citizens with the saints, and members of God's household." That means that believers, understanding their new identity in Christ, must model the reconciliation that is only found in Christ in their relationships with other believers of all backgrounds.

# Historical Context of Ephesians

## Purpose

Central to the message of Ephesians is the re-creation of the human family according to God's original intention for it. The new creation destroys the misguided view that God accepts the Jew and rejects the Gentile. Paul says the distinction was abolished at Christ's sacrificial death. Thus no more hindrance remains to reuniting all humanity as the people of God, with Christ as the head (Eph 1:22-23). The new body, the church, has been endowed by the power of the Holy Spirit to enable them to live out their new lives (Eph 1:3-2:10) and put into practice the new standards (Eph 4:1-6:9). In sum, we can say that the overall emphasis of Ephesians is on the unity of the church in Christ, through the power of the Spirit.

## Author

Paul referred to himself by name as the author of the book of Ephesians in two places (Eph 1:1; 3:1). Many regard this book as the crown of all of Paul's writings. Today some scholars think the book contains a writing style, vocabulary, and even some teachings that are not typical of the apostle. If that is the case, then it would mean a disciple of Paul had surpassed him in theological insight and spiritual perception. Of such an erudite disciple the early church has no record. Furthermore, pseudonymity (a writer writing under someone else's name) probably was not practiced by early Christians. We can conclude, in line with the undisputable acceptance of Pauline authorship in the early church, that there is no reason to dispute the Pauline authorship of Ephesians.

## Setting

Relatively little is known about the recipients of the letter called Ephesians. Some important and early manuscripts do not contain the words "at Ephesus" (Eph 1:1). The letter was carried to its destination by Tychicus, who in Ephesians 6:21 and Colossians 4:7 is identified as Paul's emissary. The Ephesian and Colossian letters probably were delivered at the same time since in both letters the apostle noted that Tychicus would inform the churches concerning Paul's situation.

## Special Features

Paul's letter to the Ephesians is an anthem to the sovereign grace of God displayed toward sinners in Christ. It contains some of the worst news ("you were dead in your trespasses and sins") and best news ("but God... made us alive with the Messiah") in all of Scripture. In view of this grace, Paul calls believers to "walk worthy of the calling" we have received.

# 3

## Session Plan

# Finding Our Way with Racial Reconciliation

### ? For Further Discussion

How would you communicate the importance of pursuing reconciliation to someone? What impact does reconciliation have on the temptation toward bitterness?

## Introduction

- ? How does the story of Jonah impact you? What does holding bitterness do to the one called by God to preach repentance?
- ? What signs can you look for in your own life to be aware of when bitterness and resentment are taking a foothold in your heart?

In this week's session, Paul addressed the rift that existed in the Ephesian church between Jewish and Gentile believers. Paul's argument was based on the shared fundamental need both groups had for the forgiveness and grace only available through Jesus Christ. To that end, Paul contrasted the life of the Gentile believers before they were Christians with after they had become Christians. The implications for what their lives were to be like as followers of Christ hold pertinent application for all believers.

## 1. Christ Redefines Our Identity (Ephesians 2:11-13)

The Gentiles were “without Christ, excluded from the citizenship of Israel, and foreigners to the covenants of promise, without hope and without God in the world.” That’s “without” a lot. The Gentiles were cut off and far from God. Paul's repeated emphasis on the separation between the Gentiles and God would have escalated their sense of ostracism, making it a truly difficult for Paul's audience to continue listening. Suddenly, though, there was a change! “But now in Christ Jesus” was the turning point. It is difficult to communicate the incredible change in trajectory those five words represented for the Gentile believers.

- ? What are some things that you were known for in your life prior to being Christ-follower? How have you seen those things fade in their association with you as you've grown in Christ? What does that change in perception mean for you in the way you see others?
- ? How does Paul's treatment of “in the flesh” apply to the work of racial reconciliation? How does focusing on the spiritual and more significant factors of a person's life help?

## 2. Christ the Peacemaker (Ephesians 2:14-17)

The blood of Christ affected both axes of relationship. Paul had just spoken of the impact on the vertical relationship—man’s relationship with God. Verse 14 began Paul’s explanation of the impact the blood of Christ on the horizontal axis—man’s relationship with others. Paul proclaimed that Christ is humanity’s peace; the reconciliation of the Jews and Gentiles was made possible because both groups were united within the body of Christ. They were, one and the same, called to be children of God. Only in Christ was such unity and peace possible.

- ❓ Why is it incongruent with following Christ to exercise an attitude of superiority over people of any other race or background?
- ❓ What walls of hostility has Christ broken down in your own life? How have you personally experienced that?

## 3. A Unified People for a Unified Purpose (Ephesians 2:18-22)

The Gentiles that were integrating into a faith system with Jewish roots should have no fear of being viewed as outsiders or foreigners. Instead, they should expect to be received warmly, as not just peers, but family. There was no idea in Paul’s writing of any acceptance of a second-class citizenry for Gentiles just because of their ethnic heritage. Their ethnic heritage was not what bought them entry into God’s household. It was, as Peter described, “the precious blood of Christ, like that of an unblemished and spotless lamb” (1 Peter 1:19) that redeemed them and brought them into the family of God.

- ❓ What are some observable indicators that you would expect to see if someone were being treated as a second-class citizen because of their background? Can you give an example of a time when you saw that occur (not necessarily church-related)? How did you respond?
- ❓ Why do you think Paul stressed so strongly and repeatedly the commonality of the believer’s need for Christ?

## Conclusion

- ❓ How comfortable are you in sharing your story of what your life was like before Christ and after Christ in gospel conversations? In sharing that story, where do you see those moments when your new identity in Christ shine particularly brightly?
- ❓ Where are some places you go where you feel like you don’t fit in, aren’t fully accepted, or have a second-class sort of citizenship? How does that impact your view of people there?

### ❓ For Further Discussion

Why is approaching reconciliation from a perspective of commonality important? How does the slow pace of reconciliation affect your efforts to see it through?



## Expanded Session Content

# Finding Our Way with Racial Reconciliation

### Introduction

Jonah is one of the most tragic figures in the Bible. His life story centered on being coerced into loving a group of people from another country that had oppressed his people. But he was never happy about it, not even for a moment. To summarize, Jonah was called by God to go and preach repentance to the Ninevites, a people he hated. Knowing that if he preached, God was going to lead this people that he hated to repentance, Jonah ran the other way by boarding a boat to Tarshish. God then caused a storm at sea that was so strong that the lives of everyone on board were in danger. Jonah insisted that he be thrown overboard, knowing that his disobedience was the reason for the storm. Sure enough, the storm subsided and Jonah was swallowed by a giant fish only to be spat out on the shore three days later. Jonah went to Ninevah, preached a sermon, and watched as revival broke out so that the Ninevites were spared God's wrath. The next verse says:

*"But it displeased Jonah exceedingly, and he was angry."* (Jonah 4:1)

He was angry at God for His loving compassion and mercy. He was so mad at the mercy extended to the Ninevites that he prayed to die. Think about that. Jonah was so mad that God extended mercy to the Ninevites that he asked God to kill him. The decision to harbor hatred for others was toxic for Jonah. It is no less toxic for the church today. The pursuit of reconciliation as emissaries of the One who came to provide ultimate reconciliation is critical for avoiding and propagating a Jonah type of hatred.

- ❓ How does the story of Jonah impact you? What does holding bitterness do to the one called by God to preach repentance?
- ❓ What signs can you look for in your own life to be aware of when bitterness and resentment are taking a foothold in your heart?
- ❓ How would you communicate the importance of pursuing reconciliation to someone? What impact does reconciliation have on the temptation toward bitterness?



## Session Summary

In this week's session, Paul addressed the rift that existed in the Ephesian church between Jewish and Gentile believers. Paul's argument was based on the shared fundamental need both groups had for the forgiveness and grace only available through Jesus Christ. To that end, Paul contrasted the life of the Gentile believers before they were Christians with after they had become Christians. The implications for what their lives were to be like as followers of Christ hold pertinent application for all believers.

### 1. Christ Redefines Our Identity (Ephesians 2:11-13)

The verses immediately prior to Ephesians 2:11, which Paul connected with "So then," highlighted the transformation that God affected in the lives of the believers; namely, they once were dead in the trespasses of the flesh and were made alive in Christ! In those verses (Ephesians 2:1-10), Paul freely used the inclusive qualifiers all and we to underscore the shared need for salvation among all humanity. The fact that verse 11 includes a stark shift of focus from everyone together to the Gentile believers specifically is significant. The abrupt change in focus was intentional in order to set up a well-used method of demarcation among the two groups.

In reminding the Gentile believers that they were once previously "Gentiles in the flesh," Paul continued his use of "the flesh" as a way of referring that which was spiritually less. Previously, he had referred to the "fleshly desires" and "inclinations of our flesh" (verse 2:3) to communicate the carnal lusts that tempted and plagued the believers. Now, in speaking of circumcision, Paul emphasized the flesh and its temporary nature to describe that which divided the believers, though he "had now learned that circumcision in the flesh was religiously irrelevant," according to F.F. Bruce.<sup>1</sup> What the Jews had historically used as a religious slur ("the uncircumcised") in speaking of the Gentiles was, in actuality, a differentiation that meant nothing as it pertained to following Christ. Rather, it was the seal of the old covenant, which was executed by the hands of men.

-  What are some things that you were known for in your life prior to being Christ-follower? How have you seen those things fade in their association with you as you've grown in Christ? What does that change in perception mean for you in the way you see others?
-  How does Paul's treatment of "in the flesh" apply to the work of racial reconciliation? How does focusing on the spiritual and more significant factors of a person's life help?

### **The Blood of Christ**

Read Hebrews 10:19-22. Notice the similar connection between the blood of Christ and the call of believers to draw near to God.

Having established the diminished importance of circumcision—a difference in the flesh—under the new covenant in Christ’s blood, Paul moved to the hopeless position of the Gentiles prior to the atoning works of Christ. The list of privileges of the Jews was significant, as expressed by their contrasted reality with the Gentiles. The Gentiles were “without Christ, excluded from the citizenship of Israel, and foreigners to the covenants of promise, without hope and without God in the world.” That’s “without” a lot. The Gentiles were cut off and far from God. Paul’s repeated emphasis on the separation between the Gentiles and God would have escalated their sense of ostracism, making it a truly difficult for Paul’s audience to continue listening.

Suddenly, though, there was a change! “But now in Christ Jesus” was the turning point. It is difficult to communicate the incredible change in trajectory those five words represented for the Gentile believers. As Max Anders says, “God, because of his mercy and love, did not leave them in this hopeless condition. Christ abolished the distinction between Jew and Gentile. All people are now considered the same before God. His death on the cross made this wonderful thing possible.”<sup>22</sup>

## **2. Christ the Peacemaker (Ephesians 2:14-17)**

The blood of Christ affected both axes of relationship. Paul had just spoken of the impact on the vertical relationship—man’s relationship with God. Verse 14 began Paul’s explanation of the impact the blood of Christ on the horizontal axis—man’s relationship with others. Paul proclaimed that Christ is humanity’s peace; the reconciliation of the Jews and Gentiles was made possible because both groups were united within the body of Christ. They shared the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. They were, one and the same, called to be children of God. Only in Christ was such unity and peace possible.

Paul carefully explained how the blood of Christ had affected the hostility between Jews and Gentiles. First, the phrase “tore down the dividing wall of hostility” would have evoked thoughts of actual, physical barriers, such as the boundaries in the temple complex. Gentile proselytes who worshiped Yahweh were forbidden from advancing beyond the Court of the Gentiles in the Jewish custom. Therefore, even those who believed as the Jews believed were not allowed to enter with the Jews in the temple when it came to their worship practices. Second, the tearing down of the dividing partition hearkened believers back to the tearing of the temple veil that occurred during Christ’s crucifixion.

Paul gave clarification about the dividing wall of hostility in his explanation of the significance of Jesus’ life and death as it pertained to the law. Specifically, Jesus made irrelevant the “law consisting of commands

and expressed in regulations.” This phrase is helpful because it is critical that one not read this verse as a complete dismissal of the Old Testament (Romans 3:31 makes this clear). Bruce says, “The law as a written code, threatening death instead of imparting life, is done away with in Christ... and when the law in that sense is done away with, the barrier between Jews and Gentiles is removed; Jewish particularism and Gentile exclusion are things of the past.”<sup>3</sup>

### The Law

Read Romans 3:31. What about Paul's argument in this verse addresses the proper approach a Christ-follower is to have to the law?

- ❓ Why is it incongruent with following Christ to exercise an attitude of superiority over people of any other race or background?
- ❓ What walls of hostility has Christ broken down in your own life? How have you personally experienced that?

The purpose of Christ's atoning work, as Paul explained, was to provide reconciliation for both groups—Jew and Gentile—to God. The significance of that statement is the universal need of salvation for everyone. The Jews had a long history of being God's people, but that did not mean every Jew was perfect or even believed in God. The power of Paul's explanation was that it leveled the playing field, so to speak, for the Jews and Gentiles. They were all spiritually bankrupt apart from the saving grace of Jesus Christ. Precisely because everyone needed the exact same forgiveness, it was possible to unite them into one body based on what they shared instead of their comparatively petty differences.

To say it another way, Paul alluded to Isaiah 57:19. Both those who were far away from God (Gentiles) and those who were near (Jews) needed the peace of Christ to be reconciled to God. There were many differences, to be sure. Additionally, it would be foolish to diminish those differences, for in so doing one might lose sight of the significance of Christ's atonement. The hostility between Jews and Gentiles was passionately hate-filled. The understanding that in Christ, all of that hostility could be transcended, under the guidance and presence of the indwelling Holy Spirit, was nothing short of miraculous.



### 3. A Unified People for a Unified Purpose (Ephesians 2:18-22)

Paul's summary of verses 14-17, found in verse 18, pointed yet again to the unification of the Jews and Gentiles based on the shared Holy Spirit as their access to the Father. The trinitarian nature of this verse made it of particular importance. Bruce comments, “In Christ they have become members of his family, and when they address him by the family name, ‘Abba! Father!’ they give evidence of being indwelt by one and the same Spirit, the Spirit of God's Son (Gal. 4:6). Within this family the Father



makes no distinction between those children who are Jewish by birth and those who are Gentile.”<sup>4</sup>

Because that was so, the Gentiles that were integrating into a faith system with Jewish roots should have no fear of being viewed as outsiders or foreigners. Instead, they should expect to be received warmly, as not just peers, but family. There was no idea in Paul’s writing of any acceptance of a second-class citizenry for Gentiles just because of their ethnic heritage. Their ethnic heritage was not what bought them entry into God’s household. It was, as Peter described, “the precious blood of Christ, like that of an unblemished and spotless lamb” (1 Peter 1:19) that redeemed them and brought them into the family of God.

-  What are some observable indicators that you would expect to see if someone were being treated as a second-class citizen because of their background? Can you give an example of a time when you saw that occur (not necessarily church-related)? How did you respond?
-  Why do you think Paul stressed so strongly and repeatedly the commonality of the believer’s need for Christ?

Paul shifted his analogy from a household to a building. In doing so, he equated both the Jews and the Gentiles as suitable building material for the building God is constructing. Christ Himself, the cornerstone, is the most important aspect of the building, giving stability and strength to the foundation and the building materials that would be erected on top of that foundation.

The image of the believers being constructed into a holy temple was a familiar one in Ephesus. The culture in Ephesus was extremely spiritual—almost entirely negatively. The landscape was littered with temples to numerous gods of black magic, occult, etc., but none so remarkable as the temple of the cult of Diana—the largest one in the world of its kind.

## Conclusion

Paul’s letter to the Ephesians was one of his most theologically elegant and doctrinally precise. In navigating difficult racial disputes among believers, Paul repeatedly emphasized the commonality all people in both groups had with regard to salvation. His careful, straightforward instruction offers numerous points of application for believers today.




First, a relationship with Jesus Christ changes a person’s identity. The beginning of Paul’s argument for the unity of believers in Christ was grounded in the understanding that, as followers of Christ, believers were no longer what they once were. Having a relationship with Christ

changes a person to be more like Christ. He was an agent of ultimate reconciliation, so believers are called to act in the same way.

Second, Christ as Lord tears down walls of hostility. Paul stated clearly that Christ came to reconcile and unify those who follow Him. When Christ reigns in a person's life, walls of hostility fall and reconciliation takes place, perhaps not instantly but inevitably.

Third, biblical reconciliation has commonality at its core. Specifically, it focuses on the universal need all humanity has for the grace of Jesus Christ as the way for salvation. That means admitting and confessing existing sinfulness, brokenness, and the lack of perfection. Doing so brings about needed humility.

Fourth, reconciliation knows nothing of second-class citizenship. Notice how careful Paul was to emphasize the equality that existed in Christ for both Jews and Gentiles. He spoke of them being fellow citizens with the saints and members of God's household. Reconciliation can be an excruciatingly slow process, but it is never complete until any sense of division is eradicated.

-  How comfortable are you in sharing your story of what your life was like before Christ and after Christ in gospel conversations? When you think about how you share that story, where do you see those moments when your new identity in Christ shine particularly brightly?
-  Where are some places you go where you feel like you don't fit in, aren't fully accepted, or have a second-class sort of citizenship? How does that impact your view of people there?
-  Why is approaching reconciliation from a perspective of commonality important? How does the slow pace of reconciliation affect your efforts to see it through?

## Prayer of Response

*Pray and thank God that Jesus is the means of reconciliation for people of all backgrounds. Thank God that He has broken down the walls of hostility through Christ. Ask Him to use you as an agent of change and reconciliation to those around you.*

## Additional Resources

- *Oneness Embraced* by Tony Evans
- *For Every People and Nation* by J. Daniel Hays
- *Woke Church* by Eric Mason

## For Next Week

### Session Title

- True North: Finding Our Political Way

### Main Passages

- Romans 13:1-7

### Session Outline

1. The Only Source of True Authority (Romans 13:1-2)
2. Be Subject and Have No Fear (Romans 13:3-5)
3. Perform Your Civic Duty (Romans 13:6-7)

### Memorize

*But now in Christ Jesus, you who were far away have been brought near by the blood of Christ.*

-Ephesians 2:13

### Daily Readings

- Monday - 1 Thessalonians 4:11-12
- Tuesday - 1 Peter 2:13-17
- Wednesday - Proverbs 21:1
- Thursday - Luke 20:20-26
- Friday - Titus 3:1-2
- Saturday - John 18:36

## Extended Commentary

### Ephesians 2:11-22

2:11. The Ephesian church seems to have experienced friction between Jewish and Gentile Christians. That would explain why Paul goes into a discussion of the relationship between those two groups at this point. In verse 11, Paul shows the Gentiles' hopeless condition before salvation by contrasting them with the Jews. God's plan of salvation in the Old Testament came through the Jewish nation. That still didn't mean that all Jews were truly redeemed. It only meant that the message of redemption came through the Jewish nation. The Ephesians, as Gentiles, did not have natural access to that message of salvation. Paul contrasts the conditions of the Jews and Gentiles to show the Ephesians how significant their salvation is.

Circumcision was a source of pride for the Jews. It was a visible sign of their historic relationship with God. Therefore, it was a term of derision—a religious slur, if you will—for the Jews to call the Gentiles uncircumcised. The Jewish nation had forfeited their special position with God, because, while they were physically circumcised, their heart attitude was not one of submission to God.

2:12. Paul emphasizes that the Gentiles were: separate from Christ; excluded from citizenship in Israel; foreigners to the covenants of the promise; without hope; without God in the world. What a bleak litany!

Jesus was the Messiah, the Savior of the Jewish nation. The nation of Israel had been given promises (covenants) by God that they would have a Messiah. This gave them hope and afforded an avenue to God for them. Not being Jews, the Gentiles did not have these advantages. A Gentile might convert to Judaism; but then he would no longer be a Gentile but a converted Jew. Therefore, true Gentiles were utterly without hope even with their many religions and many gods. The one God did not acknowledge them because they did not acknowledge him.

2:13. God, because of his mercy and love, did not leave them in this hopeless condition. Christ abolished the distinction between Jew and Gentile. All people are now considered the same before God. His death on the cross made this wonderful thing possible.

2:14. God wants peace to be both horizontal and vertical. That is, he wants Jews and Gentiles to be at peace with one another; and he wants both of them, now reconciled to each other, to be at peace with him. Christ is the one who gives us peace with God, for he himself is our peace. Mutual

animosity and hatred toward each other erected a wall of separation between Jews and Gentiles. Christ abolished the wall by making them one before him.

2:15. The Jews kept the law, with its commandments and regulations. Gentiles did not. This created a barrier between them. Jesus' death satisfied the law and therefore eliminated it as a barrier. Since neither Jew nor Gentile had to obey the law to find salvation, the means of distinguishing between the two kinds of people vanished. Again, this created peace between hostile parties.

2:16. God's purpose included more than simply uniting two parties previously at war. He wanted the new creation of one party now united horizontally to find vertical union with God. The cross destroyed both the human hostility and the hostility between people and God. This is true reconciliation—overcoming human barriers and breaking down walls that separate people from God.

2:17. Paul quoted Isaiah 57:19 to show the Word of God expected the Messiah to bring reconciliation of Jew and Gentile. Those who were far away are the Gentiles. Those who were near are the Jews.

2:18. Jesus, the Messiah, did preach the message of peace to Jews and Gentiles. In the cross he reconciled them to each other. He sent the Holy Spirit to all who believe. The Spirit opened the door to God's immediate presence. Here we see the Trinity's work in salvation. The Father developed a plan of grace for salvation through faith. The Son carried out the plan in his ministry to Jew and Gentile and in his death on the cross. The Spirit became the means of immediate access to God the Father.

2:19. Redeemed Jews and Gentiles are no longer estranged from each other but are fellow citizens of the kingdom of God. Race or nationality make no difference. All are redeemed people through Christ's cross. God's people represents the NIV interpretation of the Greek *hagion*, literally, "holy ones." Other interpreters see the holy ones as Israel, Jewish Christians, the first Christian generation, all believers, or the angels of heaven. The contrast may be between who the Gentiles were—aliens—and who they now are—kingdom citizens along with those who have always been kingdom citizens—Jews. In that case they have extended the meaning of holy ones so that it is no longer limited to Jews but also includes Gentiles, now meaning all believers. The reference could maintain the discussion of being seated in the heavenly realm and allude to the angels as other inhabitants there. Most likely, it is a general reference to people of God from all generations and uses the contrast of the Gentiles' previous state to enhance the understanding of their present

state. Alienated foreigners with no citizenship papers, they have joined the people of God with heavenly citizenship. Not only are they citizens of a heavenly kingdom, but they are also members of a spiritual family, God's household.

2:20. Paul switches to the metaphor of a building and declares that both Jews and Gentiles are "stones," as it were, of a building. The building rests on a solid foundation—the faith, testimony, and life of Christ's closest followers, his apostles. It also rests on the foundation of prophets. These are usually taken as New Testament prophets who proclaim and explain the Word of God. It may well include also the work of the Old Testament prophets in laying the foundation on which Christ built.

The key is not the foundation, however, but the cornerstone, a term taken from Isaiah 28:16 and probably interpreted in light of Psalm 118:22. The question is which building stone is meant: the cornerstone to which all other stones of the foundation are connected, or the capstone or keystone which is the last stone placed in the top of the structure over the gate. Ephesians can be interpreted in light of either imagery, but the setting of Christ as head over all things (1:10,20-23) may point to the keystone interpretation as the most appropriate here.

2:21. The stones are forming a living, spiritual temple to glorify the Lord. In the Old Testament, the presence and glory of God inhabited a literal stone building. Now God dwells not in a stone building but in the hearts of believers. Christ is the unifying factor that takes the separate stones and creates a temple. This temple is holy, set apart for God. In this temple God receives worship and praise. The hearts of believers is thus the basic worship place in God's kingdom on earth.

2:22. Paul concludes with a pointed reminder to the Gentile Ephesians. They had no room or reason for self-pity. God included them. In Christ they are being built into God's temple along with the Jewish Christians. All together they form one worship center where God lives through the presence of his Spirit.<sup>5</sup>

## References

1. Bruce, F.F. *The Epistles to the Colossians, to Philemon, and to the Ephesians*. NICNT. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1984.
2. Anders, Max. *Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, & Colossians*. Holman New Testament Commentary. Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1999.
3. Bruce.
4. Ibid.
5. Anders.