

**Sermon Series: Why Do I Need the Church?**  
**To be used with: We Are Joined Together**  
**Sermon Title Possibilities: Blessed Together**  
**Scripture: Ephesians 1:20-23; 2:8-10,19-22**

**Connection with Unit Theme:** To complement the small group study “*Why Do I Need the Church?*,” this sermon explains that all believers are blessed together in Jesus Christ. As such, we should live together under Christ, by Christ, for Christ, and with Christ. Ephesians chapters one and two speaks volumes to us about our spiritual fortunes, our spiritual framework, our spiritual functioning, and our spiritual foundation.

**Introduction:** After laying out the spiritual blessing we have from the Father (1:1-6), in the Son (1:7-12), and through the Holy Spirit (1:12-14), the apostle Paul mentions that he has been praising and praying for the saints at Ephesus. He had been praying that the Father would give them a deeper knowledge of Him, of His calling, of the wealth of His inheritance in the saints, and the immensity of His power toward believers.

These passages teach us that we live under the **Lordship** of Jesus Christ (1:20-23), we should live as the **workmanship** of Jesus Christ (2:10), we live in the **citizenship** of Jesus Christ (2:19-20), and we need to live for the **fellowship** of Jesus Christ (2:21-22).

### **1. We Live Together Under Christ. (Ephesians 1:20-23)**

This passage teaches us that Christ was raised from the dead with resurrection power to an exalted position. Christ is above all principality, power, might, and dominion. Every other person is beneath Him, and He is the HEAD of the Church. He is not just our Savior, He is our Lord. He reigns in heaven and we must make sure He reigns in our hearts.

In the body of Christ there are no big or small folks, we are all under His authority with equal worth and responsibility. We all must surrender to Him (Rom. 12:1-2), submit to Him (Luke 9:23-25), and serve Him (Matthew 4:10). We need other saints—in our local fellowships—to remind us that Jesus is King and we are the subjects, and that Jesus is the Master and we are the servants. May the Lord bless and help us live together under Christ.

### **2. We Live Together by Christ. (Ephesians 2:8-9)**

In chapter two the apostle has told his Christian audience that we were dead in sin (2:1), directed by Satan (2:2), and dominated by sinful desires (2:3). The good news is that we have been delivered by the sovereign God in Christ Jesus (2:4-6), and designed for show (2:7). This passage is one of the clear presentations of salvation by grace alone, through faith alone, and in Christ alone.

When he says “For you are saved by grace” he is communicating that Christ didn’t save us because we deserved it—the opposite is true. We didn’t deserve

it, that's why it's by grace. "Through faith" communicates that you must trust in the life, death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ to be saved. Salvation doesn't come by being in church, staying out of trouble, or living a moral life. Salvation comes when the lost person bases his whole life on earth and throughout eternity on Jesus Christ. "It is the gift of God" communicates that the grace to be saved, the faith to be saved, and the salvation itself is all a gift from God. All saints are recipients of the gift of salvation. May the Lord help us to live up to the gift.

### 3. **We Live Together for Christ.** (Ephesians 2:10)

We learn from v.10 that *we are crafted by God in Jesus Christ, we are created by God in Jesus Christ, and we are commissioned by God in Jesus Christ.* This passage tells us that we are designed with a divine purpose, we are made for the Master's ministry, and we are designed for disciple-making.

We are crafted by God. That term "workmanship" carries the idea of a hand-woven work of art. Essentially—you are a masterpiece designed by the Master. God salvaged you from sin and Satan and made you for His own service. We are created by God. God has brought us into Jesus Christ and He wants to conform us into the image of Jesus Christ. What Adam messed up—us reflecting the perfect image of God—God is restoring in and through Jesus Christ. We are also commissioned by God. God recreated us for good works which He has prepared ahead of time for us to do. You have significance, you have worth, and you have purpose, but it all comes in and through Christ Jesus.

### 4. **We Live Together with Christ.** (Ephesians 2:19-22)

Through the blood of the cross, the Lord has broken down all barriers. The context speaks of Jew and Gentile separation or hate, but the truth applies to race, gender, and class as well. In Christ we all live together. We are all a part of His citizenship (with the saints), His stewardship (on the foundation of the apostles and the prophets), His fellowship (growing into a holy temple in the Lord), and His worship (being built together for God's dwelling in the Spirit).

We are in Christ and Christ is in us. We are a part of the body of believers throughout all ages. Our citizenship is heaven although our mailing address is on earth. We are God's building where God's Spirit dwells. May the Lord help us represent Him, reflect Him, and reproduce disciples for Him before this watching world.

**Conclusion:** We were saved alone and we will stand before God alone, however, the Christian life is not to be lived alone. Every Christian should be connected to a Bible-based, Christ-centered, Spirit-led, and discipleship-driven local church. To grow spiritually, we need the Word of God, the Spirit of God, and the people of God. May the Lord help us to keep growing, flowing, sowing, and going together.

*Reginald D. Taylor holds a Master of Christian Studies and a Master of Divinity from Union University and Capital Seminary & Graduate School. He is currently pursuing the Ph.D. degree in Biblical Preaching at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. He currently serves as an adjunct professor at Union University and Senior Pastor of The Rock Church in Southaven, MS. He and his wife Dr. Tarra R. Taylor have one grown son.*