

**Life Group Notes**

**Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> May 2023**

**Speaker:** David Devenish

**Title:** The Church – Uniting The Nations

**Passage:** Ephesians 2:11-22 and 3:6-11

Key Verse: Eph 3:10.

God's purpose; whenever we hear this we should ask, "am I aligned with God's plan?" Declared to angels and demons. Through the church - through a community of ordinary, sinful people who have been saved and brought together as a new people.

This fulfils hopes and heals divisions. All the hopes expressed throughout the Old Testament are fulfilled in Christ through the church, and all the divisions caused by sin since Cain and Abel are healed.

What is the "mystery" about which Paul writes? A mystery is something we could not know unless God revealed it to us. So it can't be the blessing of the nations, this is clear throughout the Old Testament. No, the mystery is that the nations will be joined together in the Messiah, with all dividing walls torn down.

The church is "one new humanity" (2:15). The temple in ancient Jerusalem had segregated sections for different communities. But Jesus is the new temple, and now all dividing walls are demolished and there is no segregation in Christ. The church is now the new temple of the Spirit, where all have access to one Father through the Spirit.

And the church is a new family, the household of God, taking responsibility for one another, welcoming one another, loving one another.

These truths are to be practiced in the church, demonstrated to the powers and principalities, preached everywhere, prayed about, and are worth suffering for.

**Suggested Questions:**

1. Where do you most notice division and separation in Reading? How does this make you feel?
2. Try and explain Eph 3:10 in your own words. What does this important verse mean?
3. How is the church involved in healing divisions?
4. What does it mean that the church is "one new humanity?"
5. In what ways is the church of Jesus Christ an improvement on the temple in ancient Jerusalem? (clue: there are a lot!)