

## Checking In

1. Take a few minutes to check in with everyone, see how they are doing, and open with prayer.

## Learning

### *Knowing God*

#### **Key Doctrines**

- *Sin* – A condition of spiritual death marked by a life of selfish rebellion against God.
- *Union with Christ* – By grace through faith, the Holy Spirit unites us with Christ Jesus himself, such that we who were dead in sin are made alive in Christ.

#### **Key Observations**

- *Read:* Ephesians 2:1-3, Colossians 2:13, Romans 5:12, Romans 6:23
  - What moment in the story of Adam and Eve is Paul alluding to when he talks about sin leading to death?  
Paul's theology of sin is directly linked to Genesis 2:16 and Genesis 3. God told Adam and Eve that if they ate of the "tree of the knowledge of good and evil" they would die.

- What kind of "death" is Paul talking about in these passages?

The death resulting from sin is twofold. First, sin does usher in the reality of physical death into the human story, but it also ushers in the reality of spiritual death. It is this reality of spiritual death that Paul is primarily referring to in these passages. Namely, that sin is a severing of right relationship with God who is himself life. Life apart from God is in fact death.

- *Read:* Ephesians 2:3, Galatians 5:16-21
  - What does a life of sin marked by selfish rebellion look like according to Paul?  
Paul narrates for us in this passage from Galatians what he means when he talks about the "passions of the flesh" in Ephesians 2:3. Paul has several lists throughout his letters of this way of fleshly living. It is a life marked by pride, selfishness and pleasure.
- *Read:* Ephesians 2:1-7, Ephesians 1:3-10, Galatians 2:20, Galatians 3:25-29
  - What language does Paul use in these passages to talk about our union with Christ by grace through faith?  
All throughout Paul's letters we hear of two primary ways of talking about our union with Christ. First, the idea that we are "in Christ" and second the idea that Christ is "in us."

- What is the impact of our union with Christ according to these passages?

When we are united with Christ we are “blessed” with “every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places”. We are blessed with life, salvation, adoption, justification, forgiveness, redemption, etc. As those who are united with Christ by the bond of the Holy Spirit we now share in all that Jesus accomplished in his life, death, resurrection and ascension. We are given what only properly belongs to Jesus.

➤ *Read:* Romans 6:1-4

- How ought this reality of union with Christ impact the way we live our lives?  
Paul tells us that this reality of new life in Christ ought to shape the manner in which we live. It is this new identity, this new location of our existence, which impacts how we relate to God and others.

## **Listening**

### *Responding to God*

- In light of hearing this week’s sermon, our study together, and listening to God’s Word, how might God be inviting you to take a step of obedience?

## **Loving**

### *Obeying God*

- What is happening in my own life right now that I need to share and for which I need prayer?
- This week I am committed to praying for \_\_\_\_\_ about:

## **Checking Out**

- What was most meaningful about this group session for you (*Give each person 1-2 sentences to share*)?
- Close in Prayer and Read Ephesians 2:8-10.