

w/b 10th May 2020

the next step

stepping out and following where He leads

Jesus' summons is simple - 'Follow Me!'

As His disciples, those who have responded to His call, the church is, by definition, a people on the move.

As Ruth said to Naomi, so His church says to Jesus, 'Where you go, I will go.' We are bold, therefore, both as individuals and as a local fellowship of believers, to step out in faith and to follow where He leads. 'The next step' is always the most important one and it's what that 'next step' looks like for ourselves that this series of studies addresses.



You can find the background to this short series [here](#).

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10. Raised and reconciled

(Ephesians 2.1-22)

[w/b Sunday 10th May 2020]

“.. God’s workmanship .. God’s household ..”

Paul had prayed for the Ephesian believers that they might know ‘His incomparably great power for us who believe’ (Eph.1.19): he did so because he was keen that they understood just how great has been the change which had been effected in them by God. Paul moves on, therefore, in chapter 2 to describe that change.

The chapter provides a great summary of the gospel and its implications: Paul explains the wretchedness of our plight as humanity, the completeness of God’s provision in Jesus, and the greatness of His purpose through eternity.

[There are 7 questions as ever, all important - but your Community Group may well choose to concentrate on just some of them. Key questions in this study are probably 1, 4 and 6. As always try to leave good time for shared prayer!]

Hopefully there’ll again be a video introduction to this study under ‘Resources/Live streams and videos’ on the website.

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1. **Read Eph.2.1-22.** The chapter falls naturally into two parts (vv.1-10 & vv.11-22), but there is benefit in reading it as a whole and seeing how the two parts complement each other.

Our lives as believers are described in terms of a ‘before and after’: when and how did that change take place for you?

What do you think Paul wanted to impress on his readers through what he's written in this chapter?

2. Read Eph.2.1-3. What has happened to believers is nothing short of another miraculous display of God's resurrecting power, as He raised us from our spiritual deadness.

What are the main features of that 'deadness' according to what Paul says here?

If someone asked you what that meant, how would you illustrate these things from your own life?

3. Read Eph.2.4-7. In these verses, Paul spells out just what it is that God has done for us in and through Jesus, in order to explain what has created the 'before' and 'after' in our experience.

What does Paul say is the 'motivation' of God (vv.5 & 7) which lies behind the 'activity' of God (v.6)?

What difference does it make to you knowing both the 'incomparable' greatness of God's power for us (Eph.1.19) and the 'incomparable' riches of His grace towards us (v.7)?

4. Read Eph.2.8-10. The truth which Paul stresses here is vital for Christians to grasp, if we are to get the right balance, in the context of God's grace, between faith and works.

What is the relationship between grace, faith and works?

What does Paul mean by describing Christians as "God's workmanship"?

5. Read Eph.2.11-12. God's salvation involves not only our being raised from a spiritual deadness, but our being reconciled from a relational aloneness.

Paul here lists five features of that former condition: what are they?

From your own personal experience, which of them (if any) do you recollect feeling most keenly prior to conversion?

6. Read Eph.2.13-18. The reconciliation effected by God through Jesus has both *vertical* and *horizontal* dimensions to it: the wall of hostility has been destroyed.

The conclusion to which these verses build is given in v.18 you've been brought near and given access: what do you find makes it hard for you to live your life 'near' to God?

What 'walls of hostility' are you conscious of the Lord having broken down in your relationships with others?

How do you think this 'peace' might find expression in the life of a fellowship such as ours?

7. Read Eph.2.19-22. These verses correspond to what Paul had said in v.10, and spell out key aspects of our being "members of God's household."

According to Paul's statement here, what are (or are to be) the core characteristics of our life as a fellowship?

In which aspects of our life as God's family would you say we are strong, and in which is there work to be done?