



# the Source

*Let anyone who is thirsty come to me...*

The Letter to the Ephesians affirms that we are people who are meant to live fully in God's love on both sides of eternity. The letter reminds us that we were chosen in Christ from "before the foundations of the world." (1:4) It also sets out that we are designed to be "in Christ" now, even as in the future. (2:7) Ephesians 2:2-3 recognizes that we have inherited a world that is often broken, and that we ourselves fall into empty *dead* lives when we conform ourselves to a world apart from God's love. It goes on to explain that the death and resurrection of Christ carry with them a power so deep that evil itself can be named, confronted and overthrown. We are *raised* with Christ; gaining a view from the throne of Christ; a view that sees through and beyond self-centeredness, false promises and trickery.

The world offers its share of *bait and switch*. We are enticed by other people, by advertising and sometimes by our own curiosity to do things that don't fulfill what was promised. Instead we are left holding the bag: a boatload of problems to resolve, bills that are impossible to pay or the crushing disappointment that someone, some experience or some thing wasn't what we thought it would be. In fact, it so drags us down that we find ourselves living in what seems like a world divorced from the one we are looking for.

The good news is that the love of God in Christ is deeper than evil, deeper than sin, and deeper than the effects of sin upon our lives, families, communities and creation. God comes with grace, mercy and peace to the heart of our lives. God lifts us up to be partners in that kind of love. It is a love that drains evil of its power and sets the world spinning on a new axis. Such partnership is pure gift and a gift that we are ever called to share.

— Dr. Beverly Jones, Associate Pastor

## Consider the Source Ephesians 2:1-10

### A Family Affair

We are now in our second full week after Easter. We know Christ died and are so excited about his resurrection! But what does that resurrection mean for us today?

Read Ephesians 2:1-10 as a family, focusing on resurrection. Sometimes people think resurrection is going to heaven after you die. However, Paul (author of Ephesians) describes it differently. The first few verses describe life apart from God. God loves us so much. He offers us an opportunity to have a new life, or resurrection on earth, walking close with Him. You could even think of each morning as a resurrection. When you get up, will you choose to walk with God today? Or will you choose to ignore him? Discuss what you think Paul means in verse ten. In this new life, we are created for good works. Since all of us are created differently, maybe our *good works* will not look the same. As a family, brainstorm a few things at which each of you are good. After each person has a list, make a plan for how you can use those gifts to serve or bless others. Have fun with it this week!

*Dear God, thank you for the resurrection of your son Jesus. And thank you for creating new life in us. Help us to share our good works with others as we are walking with you. Amen.*

Jennifer Hall, Director of Children's Ministry

### Monday: Ephesians 2:8-10

This verse uses the word *works* in two different ways. The first way uses *works* as a striving to achieve a good relationship with God. The second uses *works* as a result of grace received by the gift of faith.

- When you catch yourself trying to be religious, what helps you to let go of such striving so that you can receive the gift of faith that God has already given you?

### Tuesday: Ephesians 2:13; 21

This portion of the letter is trying to communicate the full unity of the church as God intends, especially when people in the church are tempted to succumb to the pride of division, status or favoritism.

- Where does the church generally (and our church in particular) express itself in humble unity? In boastful division?

### Wednesday: Ephesians 3:1-7, 13

Paul was imprisoned by those who were hostile to his mission to include the Gentiles (aliens and strangers, v.2:19) who had come to faith in Christ. He now addresses the Gentiles as fellow heirs and members of the same church, that is, the body of Christ. Paul seems to share his thoughts to encourage the Gentiles who may feel that it is their fault that he was imprisoned and is suffering. He tells them that his sufferings are their glory.

- What do you think Paul means by his sufferings are their glory?

### Thursday: Ephesians 4:1-3

...lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called.

- How do you understand your calling in life in light of the First Church mission statement: First Church exists to share the love of God in Jesus Christ?
- How does your calling in life inform your identity as a parent, spouse or child? In your professional vocation? As a neighbor? Citizen? As a member of the body of Christ?

### Friday: Ephesians 5:1-2

When we were children we imitated others to learn how to become a human being. This passage tells us that we are to imitate God, as beloved children.

- What Bible stories teach you how to imitate God?
- What aspects of Jesus's life inspire you to imitate him?