

## Ephesians: In Christ, In Community: "A Reason To Be Encouraged"

### ICEBREAKER

As you look to the next 6-12 months, what are one or two things you're looking forward to?

### GETTING STARTED

As we work our way through the book of Ephesians, we see Paul keep coming back to reconciliation. It's really all about relationship. As we move towards relationship with Christ, we move towards relationship with each other. In this week's passage, Paul points out that the Church is a pretty big deal.

At Cold Springs we talk about the value of "Three AM Friendships." These friendships consist of other followers of Jesus Christ with whom we experience unity of purpose and significance. The Bible puts it best in the following passages: Proverbs 27:17, Ecclesiastes 4:9-12, Hebrews 10:24-25.

1. According to the above passages and this sermon series so far, how would you describe being "In Christ, In Community?"
2. As a follower of Jesus your "Three AM" friends are critical to your journey with Him. What makes God's community an inclusive family rather than an exclusive, "us" vs. "them" mindset?

### DIGGING DEEPER: EPHESIANS 3:1-13

Paul shows an interesting *point of view* regarding his imprisonment.

3. What does Paul mean by the "mystery" revealed to him?
4. How does Paul encourage his readers in this week's passage?

None of us want to get caught up in the same trap as the Ephesians did in losing the heart of what it means to follow Jesus: to love God and love others. The truth is that no matter how far away from God you have gone, you are never too far from his reach of grace. God's got a plan, which shows us we will be okay. In fact, living out God's plan always brings glory to Him and His people.

5. How does verse 12 guide your point of view?
6. Following Jesus means living a life of purpose. What would you do differently if you knew you could not fail - that you would be okay?