

The Household of God

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[0 : 00] Take out your Bibles with me please and turn or let it fall open to the book of Ephesians chapter 2.

So that we might be who he has created us to be.

That we might live out the identity to which he's given us. The title today, The Household of God. We'll be looking at verses 19 and 20 where he calls us as a body, he calls us the household. And he's going to use a couple of pictures here to show us what he has created us to be.

I want to read from verse 11 through 22 in Ephesians chapter 2. So if you're able please stand. So read from Ephesians chapter 2 beginning at verse 11.

[1 : 20] Therefore remember that formerly you, the Gentiles in the flesh, who are called uncircumcision by the so-called circumcision, which is performed in the flesh by human hands, remember that you were at that time separate from Christ, excluded from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.

But now, in Christ Jesus, you who formerly were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.

For he himself is our peace, who made both groups into one and broke down the barrier of the dividing law by abolishing in his flesh the enmity, which is the law of commandments contained in ordinances, that in himself he might make the two into one new man, thus establishing peace. And might reconcile them both in one body to God through the cross by having put to death the enmity. And he came and preached peace to you who were far away and peace to those who were near.

For through him we both have our access in one spirit to the Father. So then, you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and are of God's household, having been built upon the foundation of the apostles and the prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, in whom the whole building being fitted together is growing into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are being built together into a dwelling of God in the Spirit.

[3 : 40] Father, so reads the word. Let us pray. Father, guide us today in our study. As we dig into the words of Paul, Father, open them up to us that we might see the pictures that Paul is presenting for us.

not just for knowledge, but for application. Grant us to see what you have made us to be together. How we fit together, how we're joined together, how we grow together. How this is your design and how this is what you design every believer to be a part of.

So apply it to us by your Spirit, we pray in Christ's name. Amen. Please be seated. So I came across this story as I was preparing the message this week.

It's this story of a church member who was a regular attender who had suddenly stopped attending. So the pastor got in contact and visited and the night he visited was a chilly evening and he found the man home alone sitting by a great fire.

[5 : 11] The pastor welcomed in, sat down by the fire and said nothing. After a time, he took the thong, tongs, tongs, and picked up a burning log and placed it off to the side and then sat back down.

They sat together and watched the fire. The lone log flame diminished. Had a momentary glow, then no more.

It became cold and died. The pastor got up to leave. And the man said to him, thanks for the fiery sermon.

So the picture of the log that burned out is a picture of why we need each other. It's a wonderful picture of on our own, right, the flame dies, it grows cold, it burns out, and we drift away.

We forget what's essential and we lose contact. This has happened more and more over the years of my pastorate, seeing people kind of drop off and drop away and you pursue them and they have no interest.

[6 : 32] They've grown cold, right, because they're not apart. They're not being warmed by one another, being encouraged by one another, which is what Christ designed.

Christ created the church to be a family that grows together, that encourages one another, that builds up one another. That is his design. We are the body, the physical body of Christ on earth. When Jesus was on earth, he was the body of Christ. Obviously. He ascended to heaven and left us to be the body of Christ. Not individual bodies, but a body together as a congregation.

We don't do it alone. He never designed us to be alone. Never. There are rare instances where someone has to be stuck physically or something like that.

Or, in Paul's case, in prison for the gospel. But it is not God's design for us to lone ranger it. And so this is part of what Paul's communicating to us here in Ephesians 2.

[7 : 47] One of the reasons that he's reconciled us together to becoming one to God is to see that what we are to be now.

Now that we're reconciled. So, today, what we're looking at and we're asking the question, to what has God joined every believer?

what is our new identity as believers? So, if you have the outline, if you're looking at the outline, you can see that there's a basic chiasm in this structure to this section, verses 11 to 22, the first three verses, 11 to 13, we see the alienation, right?

We remember, he tells us to remember what we used to be, how we were alienated, we were without Christ, without hope, without God, right? We were cast off as Gentiles, outsiders to God's people.

And then in verses 13 to 18, we see the reconciliation, what God has done, how he has solved that, how he has brought both groups, Jew and Gentile together to be one new man, to be one new people.

[9 : 06] And he's done that by the blood of the cross. He's done that by the blood of Jesus, his reconciliation. That's what God's cross has done. The cross has not just given us forgiveness.

The cross has created a whole new people. It has created this unity of people. And then we see now, verses 19 to 22.

So what we were before and what we are now. So we see the other side of it. The inclusion. Now, we're no longer strangers and aliens.

Now we have a new identity. Now we are the fellow citizens. We are now members of the household. We are both politically, the word citizen means, it comes from the word politico.

So in a sense, we are a nation before God. It's not the, the U.S. is not the nation of God. Israel's not the nation of God.

[10 : 09] The church is the nation of God. That's what God has created. It includes both Jew and Gentile. It's much bigger than just one small nation.

And so, this is what God has done. So because of Christ, we have a radically new identity. So we're going to focus on verse 19 and 20.

Where Paul shows that we have been reconciled for a reason. We've been reconciled for a transformation. To be transformed into this new identity.

So Paul's going to give us two pictures. One picture in verse 19 and another picture in verse 20. So we'll look at the two pictures. Verse 19 shows a united people.

A picture of a united people that is both a nation and a family. And then secondly, verse 20, he's going to give us a picture of a building. How we are like a building that is being built on a foundation with a cornerstone.

[11 : 11] Right? That we grow that way. He's mixing metaphors but he's giving us these pictures. And ultimately, that picture is going to become verses 21-22 the temple of God.

That we become the new temple. We are the house of God. We are where God dwells. Both individually but more importantly, corporately together.

God's spirit dwells. So let's look at this. First picture. First picture in verse 19 is a dual image. So we are one people of God united in one nation and a family.

So two images there. One people of God united in one nation and a family. So both kind of a big picture nation, right?

and then they but a more intimate picture that's more intimate as a family as well. So notice verse 19 you get a contrast. He says, so then you are no longer strangers and aliens.

[12:21] He's emphasizing the status, our status has been reversed. We're no longer strangers. We're no longer outsiders. No longer second class citizens.

citizens. We are no longer non-citizens. Where he said back in verse 11, remember, well, verse 12, remember that you were at that time separate from Christ, excluded from the commonwealth, excluded from the politico of Israel, from the politics of Israel, from the nationality of Israel. You're excluded from that citizenry. So that's okay, I can go louder. You're fine, you're fine. You're excluded.

And now we become fellow citizens with Israel. Okay, that's powerful. That's not what Israel was in the Old Testament because under the Old Covenant it was just Israel.

Whereas Gentiles could come in but only as outsiders. Right? Never close, never near. And now God radically has changed that. Why? We saw last week by abolishing the enmity.

[13:34] What was the enmity? What keeps us out? He says the enmity was the law. The law was the enemy. The law, because the law condemns us.

It's not that there's anything bad about the law. The law is holy, righteous, and good. But we can't keep it. And so it becomes our condemner. It becomes our death.

Right? A good thing becoming our death because we can't keep it. But Christ, good. So he could reconcile us as our substitute. Amen. Yes.

So, the contrast. No longer all of that but now the stress is on a high honor, a privilege, a value, identity, how we've been radically changed and fully included now.

Equal rights as God's family because we all come before the cross. We all come before the cross. Nobody has a step up.

[14:33] Nobody has a leg in. Is that the phrase leg in? If it's not, cross it out. I don't know. I don't know what I'm saying. I know what I'm trying to say, but yeah.

Leg up. There it is. What did I say? Leg in? Leg in. Leg in. Leg in. So he's showing a dual image. First of all, fellow citizens, he says.

Verse 19. We are fellow citizens. Fellow politico. Fellow citizens with the saints. Before we are only alongside but not in.

Now we're united. Now we're joined together. Now we are a new nation. We are counted with all God's people. We are included.

Before we are excluded and strangers to the covenants of promise. Now we're included into those covenants of promise. The promises to Abraham that all families would be blessed through the one seed from Adam.

[15:41] From Abraham. Through Judah. Right? Through David. Finally through Joseph and Mary.

That one seed would unite us all. The covenants with the fathers. The covenant with David. The promise to David of a nation. A new nation where Christ would sit on the throne.

On David's throne forever. forever. Not merely 40 years like David's son Solomon. But be the son of David who would rule forever and not just a single nation but all nations.

King of kings. Lord of lords. The king in heaven who will return. Amen. So one image was not enough.

Paul kind of blends this fellow citizens image so this political kind of image national image with family now.

[16:46] He calls he says at the end of verse 19 we are of God's household. That's a picture of family. House members. We belong to a family.

That's why we call each other brother and sister. We share the same father. That's why Jesus taught us to pray.

So early on Jesus taught us to pray our father. Not my father. He taught us to think together.

Our father. Give us this day just my bread. Right? No? Give us this day our.

Forgive us our debts. Not just mine but ours. I'm thinking of our community our family. Right? Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.

[17:50] We're praying not just for ourselves but for one another. I mean Jesus taught us that way back in Matthew 5. Nope. 6. I mean that's his early teaching.

It wasn't something that developed. That was his plan. That was plan A. Right? To bring us all together. It's a picture of a family where we know one another where we're personal with one

another where we're intimate and we rub shoulders with one another.

We have an identity together and a security together and a refuge together. Is it a house? A house is a building but we like to think of it as home.

Right? And home connotes the idea more of a refuge. I know early on, that's what we wanted to establish, our home to be a refuge.

Right? Our home to be a home. Right? I'm okay. I'm secure here. Maybe out there, but here.

[18 : 59] And that's what Jesus intends the church to be, a refuge. For those who are hurting, for those who have been hurt, for those who are wounded, for those who are healing and struggling, been knocked down.

Right? where we can come alongside and hug each other and say it's alright and pray for one another and walk with each other. Paul intimated this back in chapter 1, verse 5, where he talked about how we've been adopted.

Right? We're chosen and then we're predestined to adoption as sons, as children of God. You know, adoption means you're wanted.

You're wanted, you're chosen, you're welcomed, you're, you know, and so God wanted us, he planned on it, he wants to include us.

Though we may fight, okay, though we may have disagreements, do we have disagreements sometimes? No. bless her heart.

[20 : 17] Okay, I'll leave you in. Yeah. That's right. I mean, if you're in the church long enough, that happens. Of course it happens. We're people. We have weaknesses and we have selfishnesses.

Selfishnesses. Yeah, okay. You know, I mean, that's, I get short-sighted and I get tired and I, you know, and so I can offend people and I need, I need you to confront me when I do that.

This is a blessed congregation because that has, for the first time, I've had that here. Not just recently, but a while ago and I so, I'm so thankful for that.

I had known I'd offended Sema and they told me and I was able to go and make that right. Say, I'm not going to do that again.

I'm so glad you told me that. And that's what we did. I don't know how it's that easy. But we've done that.

[21 : 16] I mean, Rick knows. We've done that here. We've dealt with some hard stuff. But God blesses as a result. And so, but that's how we, you know, we're going to find out later in chapter four that being part of the body, how you walk in a manner worthy of the Lord is to do things like bear with one another.

What's that mean? What's that mean to bear with one another? I mean, somebody's doing something I don't really like and I bear with it.

Right? I show patience. I show long suffering. Most stuff is trivial and I just bear with it. when it becomes closer to sinfulness than I must confront it.

But if it's simply, you know, personality quirk or I'm tired or whatever, we bear with. That's family. Right?

Uncle Joe, we bear with. Uncle Joe. Bless his heart. He means well. Right? So, so, that's what we do.

[22 : 26] Do you see yourselves this way? Do you think of yourself as part of a family, as part of a body here? When you come to Little Log Church, do you think of that? Particularly if you're members.

If you're thinking or long time attenders, do you think of it that way? Right? That this is my family.

This is my home. This is where I find refuge. This is where people will love me with my weaknesses and they'll confront me with my wrongs.

Not to put me down, but to build me back, to draw me back. Right? Right? Remember, even on the cross, Jesus had this picture or had this conviction, right?

He's hanging on the cross and his mother's in front of him, right? Just weeping as he's dying on the cross and he looks over and he sees John, his closest apostle.

Probably his closest friend on earth. John. The one who was called the one whom Jesus loved really adored him. They were close.

[23 : 41] And he looked at John and said, John, behold your mother. Mother, behold your son. Family. Not family, but family.

Right? New kind of family. So John wrote in 1 John 3, he says, see what kind of love the Father has given to us that we should be called children of God.

That's an expression of God's love. That he calls us his children. And so we are. The reason why the world does not know us is that it did not know him.

Beloved, we are God's children now. And what we will be has not yet appeared, but we know that when he appears, we shall be like him because we shall see him as he is.

And everyone who thus hopes in him purifies himself as he is pure. Focusing on Christ is the source of purity. But he calls us children of God.

[24 : 49] If you love God as your Father, you will love his children. We will love one another. We will love as brothers and sisters.

We will love as family. We will know each other. We will come to know each other quite closely and intimately. Have you adopted the church as your family?

He's adopted you. Have you adopted his church? Have you joined his family? Have you made a commitment to the family?

This is what membership at Little Lock Church expresses. It demonstrates this adoption, this commitment, this act of faith and trust. I know there's some folks that are new here.

I'm not laying that on you. I'm saying, I'm inviting you to think about it if this is where God has led you to be. At some point make that step.

[25 : 52] I mean, basically, I see membership as an issuing from some certain facts of Scripture.

Right? God has commissioned elders of the church to be responsible for a particular congregation.

congregation. So, we as elders have to think about, you know, who am I accountable for? Am I accountable for anybody who walks through the doors of the church? Am I accountable for everybody in every church?

Or am I accountable for certain people in this church? Same thing for believers. elders. You're to be, you're to have a certain relationship, a responsibility to elders.

Well, which elders are you responsible to? As a believer, you're responsible to an elder. Who is that? Every elder of every church? You're going to have some problems with that.

But those are things you have to think through. And again, I'm not, I'm looking at some newer folks here, here, here. I'm not directing it at you. I'm asking us all to think about it.

[27 : 03] We all have, we all have responsibilities of one another. To whom is that? Because certain one anotherings we can't do with every other, every believer in the world.

We can only do with those that we're close enough to bear with and to suffer with and to rejoice with. Right? And to confront. Right?

This is part of being the family, part of being the household of God. So the first picture he gives us is this dual image of one people of God in a single nation and a family.

The second picture is verse 20. It's about a building, about a household. So he talks about, he has talked about this image of household and now he turns to the picture of a house, of a building.

Right? So the second picture is this. We are the building of God founded on Christ's teachings. So in this building he brings forth two elements.

[28 : 15] Right? He talks about being built on a foundation that has the cornerstone which is Christ Jesus. So both a foundation and a cornerstone.

So let's talk about the cornerstone first because that's the most critical part. So the cornerstone is what? It's the first stone laid for the building.

It's the first stone laid. It has to be placed exactly right because it will test the rest of the building in four ways.

Going this way and going this way. So from building on top of it up and building alongside. That's how important it is.

The significance of the cornerstone, its placement is critical because everything else is determined by it. The cornerstone directs and governs and orients and controls everything else.

[29 : 18] Wish I could see the cornerstone over there. So I'll say this is the cornerstone. Just believe. Right?

So it's laid at a corner. Right? And so everything of the building goes this way and goes this way directs. Right? It's got to be in line with it.

Got to be in line with it. Where's Dan Spiegelberg? Last time I talked about this, this engineer over here says, oh yeah, I can relate to that. That's cool. Any other, yeah, we've got other engineers in

here that will understand this.

Okay? You can teach me on this, not me. So both ways. But also up. Right? So it's got to be in line with it. So everything built on top of it has to look at that cornerstone and make sure you're in line with it.

Everything built alongside of it has to look back at that cornerstone and make sure you're in line with it. That cornerstone directs everything else of the building. So that cornerstone is Christ.

[30 : 28] And the foundation and the building must be in line with Jesus Christ. He defines all that is true and false, everything that is right or beyond him.

So, second element is the foundation of the apostles and prophets. Right? He says in verse 20, having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone.

So Christ is the cornerstone, then we have the foundation of the apostles and prophets. The apostles are the ones chosen directly by Christ, trained by him, directly commissioned by him with his authority as eyewitnesses.

They were the direct link to Christ. We're talking about capital A apostles. Right? The ones directly commissioned by God.

So you got the original 12 and then you got people like Paul, who absolutely claims his apostleship because he was directly commissioned by Christ.

[31 : 34] He didn't see all the life of Christ like the other apostles, but he saw many other things. And as we know, he was directly commissioned by Jesus Christ to go to the Gentiles.

So, who are the prophets? Well, the prophets, similar, they, like the apostles, were given revelation. So we read later in Ephesians 3 where Paul says, by revelation there was made known to me the mystery as I wrote before in brief. And by referring to this, when you read, you can understand my insight into the mystery of Christ, which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets in the spirit.

What's that revelation? Ephesians 3 6, to be specific, that the Gentiles are fellow heirs and fellow members of the body and fellow partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.

That's the revelation. That was new. That was not in the Old Testament. That was new. There was hints that Gentiles will be involved.

[32 : 53] There was hints as early as the promise to Abraham that in you all the families of the earth will be blessed. But didn't know how that looked. And then after the development of the nation of Israel how are the Gentiles to be included?

Right? So that was what was revealed to the apostles and prophets that Jew and Gentile would be united in one body. They'd be fellow heirs, fellow members, fellow receivers of the promises.

So that's the prophets. They had that direct revelation. So what is this foundation? What does this look like? Let's try to work this out a little bit.

In 1 Corinthians 3, Paul is addressing one of the issues that the Corinthians had. The Corinthians had a lot of issues. We could say, you know, Corinthians is now the Coloradans.

Can I say that? I used to say California so nobody would have a problem. I came from California so it was the epistle to the Californians because they had all those problems. So do we, so do Coloradans.

[34 : 04] I've lived here long enough. So one of the problems they had was they had divisions and they were dividing over their leaders, right?

Some would say, I'm of Apollos or I'm of Cephas or I'm of Paul. You know, I follow Paul and Paul was like, knock it off. Here's how he responded.

1 Corinthians 3. For we are God's fellow workers. You know, I planted Apollos water. We're all working for God. We are God's fellow workers.

You are God's field, God's building. According to the grace of God given to me, like a skilled master builder, I laid a foundation. So here's going to do this picture of the building.

I laid a foundation. And someone else is building upon it. So I laid the foundation. Apollos comes behind me and builds upon it. That's what a picture he's given. Let each one take care how he builds upon it.

[35 : 07] For no one can lay a foundation other than the one which is laid, which is Christ Jesus.

It's the only foundation we can live on. Now, if anyone builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, each one's work will become manifest, for the day will disclose it

because it will be revealed by fire.

And the fire will test what sort of work each one has done. So imagine gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble. What's going to do okay in the fire?

The first ones, right? Hay, wood, stubble, probably won't survive the fire, right? I mean, right, we've seen it. Right? So he's talking about different levels of quality of work.

So if the work that anyone has built on the foundation survives, he will receive a reward. If anyone's work is burned up, he will suffer loss, though he himself will be saved, but only as through fire.

Do you know? Now he's going to talk about the kind of building we are. Do you know that you are God's temple, and that God's spirit dwells in you? So if anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy him, for God's temple is holy, and you are that temple.

[36 : 33] So what kind of foundation is laid? So when Paul says, I laid the foundation, and it's Jesus Christ, what's his foundation? His foundation is Jesus Christ, but what is, what does Jesus bring us?

Perfection. Right, what? Perfection. Perfection? Well, okay, but he brings us the gospel, right? Believes the good news. He brings us the gospel, what work he has done.

That's the foundation is the gospel, how we enter into the family he's done, right? And then the work built upon it. So Apollos comes along, Paul has done and evangelized, right?

He's brought people to Christ through the preaching of the gospel. Now Apollos comes along and pastors that congregation. He builds them up, and what does he build them up with?

Right? What do you build upon? So remember the cornerstone. So if you're building on top, you look down at the cornerstone and see if you're in line with Christ, right?

[37 : 36] So whatever is taught after Christ and the apostles has to line up with Jesus. Make sense?

It has to line up with Jesus. So we're 20 stories up, whatever, 21, whatever, whatever century we're in now. Right? So we're looking way down, but we still have to look down, am I in line with Jesus and the apostles?

Because the apostles have to be in line with him, and now the teachers have to be in line with him. Are we in line with him? How do you know that?

So the foundation laid is the teaching and the instruction about Jesus Christ, the doctrine, the truth, the historical gospel, Jesus and Christ being the cornerstone, the gospel, the foundation built, is built upon the teaching of the apostles.

So if the first four books are about Jesus, we call them the gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. And then Acts is about the spread of the gospel, right?

[38 : 49] The works of the Holy Spirit, the foundation or the founding of the different churches, how that gospel spread. So if we call that the foundation, the cornerstone of the foundation, what is Romans through Revelation?

the building. Teachings of Paul. Teachings of Paul. Teachings of Paul, Peter, John, right?

Jude, James, so all of those line up with that cornerstone. So any teaching we do, Josiah, any teaching we do, we want to make sure we're lined up with Jesus Christ.

I don't say something beyond what he said. I don't say something less than what he said. If he speaks some hard words, I have to speak those hard words. If he speaks those gracious words, I must preach those gracious words.

Right? Not just line up where I like, oh, I like the hard words, you know. No, I don't like the hard words. So how do we build on the New Testament?

[40 : 06] We're 20 stories up, how do we build on the New Testament? Go back to your reference. Do we add to it? No. We don't add to it.

It's the foundation. We don't spread the foundation. We build upon it. We make sure we're in line with it. We build it carefully.

We must be in line with the gospel of Jesus Christ and the apostolic teaching. This has huge implications for any later teaching.

Does it square with Christ? Is it consistent with the New Testament? Is it the clear teaching of Scripture? So consider the things, well, there's lots of stuff out there today.

There's lots of stuff out there today. It comes in books. It comes in online stuff. It comes in popular preaching. You get all that kind of stuff. How do you determine what's from God and what's not?

[41 : 08] Does it line up with Jesus? Have they spoken beyond Jesus? Have they spoken something apart from what Jesus has said?

They can say, well, I'm an apostle. I get letters sometimes. I'm the apostle such and such and so you must listen to me. I put that in the file.

Or I'm the prophet. Are you now? Be careful. Don't want to beat you on judgment day. So, let's apply this.

One, a couple just simple applications. One, are you a careful listener? Are you a careful listener to all that you hear as Christian teaching?

It'll all claim to be Christian. But is it all? Is it over-highlighting something? Does it highlight the ministry of the Holy Spirit over the ministry of Jesus?

[42 : 16] That's wrong. If it does, if it emphasizes the ministry of the Holy Spirit. Why do I say that? Because the ministry of the Holy Spirit was to glorify Jesus.

And so if it's uplifting the Spirit, then you're not in line with the Spirit, because the Spirit wants to elevate Jesus, just as Jesus wanted to elevate the Father. does it say something besides what Jesus said?

So, health and wealth gospel, what do you think? Is that in line? No? Jesus didn't live in a mansion? Name it and claim it? No? Why? I think we can just claim things? Well, Jesus' teaching on prayer was waiting.

the overwhelming emphasis of Jesus' teaching on prayer was wait. Keep knocking like the widow. Keep knocking like the friend of midnight. Right?

[43 : 23] That it's going to take a while. Not name and claim. Well, do we claim promises? Sure, we can claim promises.

Sure, we can remind God, hey, you've promised this. Okay? I still might have to wait. Right? But I can express my faith in that.

But that's not getting it right now. That just isn't jiving with scripture. You look at all of scripture, everything's waiting. Everything takes time.

Very rarely is it immediate. Miracles are unique, not regular. if they're regular, then they're not miracles.

A miracle, by definition, happens very infrequently. Okay? What am I getting into here?

[44 : 28] Okay, they say they're apostles. Well, okay, how do I know? How do I know if their teaching is true or false? Well, is it consistent with Christ and the New Testament? So, second application.

One is, are you a careful listener? Two, we are being built together. We're not built as separate body parts that operate independently. We're built to operate as a body.

We all fit into the body. We're all given gifts that by itself, what is that gift? The gift is to serve the body. So, if my gift is teaching or my gift is encouraging or my gift is mercy or my gift is serving or proclamation, various different, right?

We're not all the I. Paul likes that picture of the I rolling around. That's Paul's humor. So, we are one household, we are one body, we're a family in a household.

Like the log on the fire, when apart from others our flame diminishes and burns out, grows cold, and dies. So, let us, let us take the benefit of having one another and loving one another and building up one another and encouraging one another.

[45 : 54] Let's pray. Father, we thank you. Thank you for the word, Lord, that gives us instruction, that gives us direction, that gives us application. We thank you for the pictures that you give to us, Lord, the picture of a family, the picture that we are together, right, all your nation, all of us together are your nation, the nation of God, the nation of Christ as King.

And that we're a household being built together, Lord, that we are built on the foundation of the apostles and the prophets, prophets, with Jesus Christ himself, the cornerstone from which we all take direction.

So may those things help us, Lord, square away things in our mind as we must discern, as we must make judgments, as we must make discernments about other teachings.

And help us to know your word well enough that we can evaluate those things rightly. These things we pray in Christ's name. Amen. Amen.