

WEEKLY REFLECTION

Before the apostle Paul talks about the household of God in verse 19, he tells the early church that because of Christ's sacrifice, they now have access through His Spirit to God the Father. (Eph. 2:18) That is why the church is now the household of God, no longer strangers and aliens but adopted into His family to become fellow citizens with the saints, members of the household of God. (Eph. 2:19; Rom. 8:15-17) That's good news for us who were exiled from God's presence, but what does it mean to be a member of the household of God?

First we must determine where we are: are we a guest, a friend, or a full-fledged member of God's family? The church must be a family that warmly welcomes guests, like Christ before us. Some guests might stop by for various reasons, while others want to know more about Him. Eventually as those guests stick around longer so that they are known by the community, they become friends whom we get to know and spend time with. But still—as Paul shows us, the pre-requisite for becoming part of the family is adoption by God through Christ and His Spirit. That entails knowing not just His people, but also God Himself by abiding in His Word (Jn. 8:31-32) and becoming His follower, His disciple.

And what about the household of God? Now that we are family, how do we commit to one another and uphold our responsibilities to each other? We can begin by loving one another with the same sacrificial love that Christ showed us. (Jn. 15:12-14) Moreover, we must be just as committed to human flourishing as the head of our household is. We can display that commitment by keeping Jesus' commandments to us (v.10), and by seeking to bear His good fruit. (v.8)

QUESTIONS

QUESTION ONE:

What is a tradition, habit, or quirk that defines your family or friend group? What's the story behind that practice? What's one "tradition" (whether silly or serious!) that you would like to start with your group, that helps to define who you are?

QUESTION TWO:

What are the differences between being a "guest", a "friend", and "family"? What is difficult about moving from being a "friend" (someone you do life with) to "family" (someone who is committed through thick and thin, even when it is hard to love or show up)? Which stage do you think you're at?

QUESTION THREE:

Even if we are part of God's household, we must continue to grow in being more like Him. We can do so by abiding in His Word, by loving each other sacrificially; and by bearing good fruit.

Which one of these three feels the hardest in your current season? Why is that? How can you and your group continue to grow not just in your sense of belonging, but also in your contribution and service to God's family?