



SERIES: Ephesians
SPEAKER: NAT CRAWFORD
Wednesday, January 20, 2021
Scripture: Ephesians 2: 19-22
TITLE: You're No Stranger

Being a stranger isn't a lot of fun, especially when you're an extrovert. The good news is for us extroverts, being a stranger won't last long.

This past summer, we moved into a new home in a new neighborhood. We were strangers in the Crown Pointe neighborhood. It didn't take long for us to meet the neighbors in our cul-de-sac. But even though we know who each other is, we are still living as foreigners in a now-familiar place. If you feel like a stranger, a foreigner, or an outsider in your workplace, neighborhood, apartment building, or family, God has some encouragement for you in Ephesians 2:

So now you Gentiles are **no longer strangers** and foreigners. You are citizens, along with all of God's holy people. You are members of God's family. ²⁰ Together, **we are his house**, built on the foundation of the apostles and the prophets. And the **cornerstone** is Christ Jesus himself. ²¹ We are **carefully joined together** in him, becoming a holy temple for the Lord. ²² Through him, you Gentiles are also being made part of this dwelling where God lives by his Spirit. (Eph. 2:19-22, NLT)

Don't you love that? "You are no longer strangers". What a beautiful picture of what happens when we become a Christian. It's a family where everyone matters, and everyone belongs. It doesn't matter if you have a mullet or a perm. It doesn't matter if you're a mechanic or a CEO. It doesn't matter if you've been divorced 5 times, or single your whole life. No one is a stranger in the body of Christ.

Paul says, when you join the family, we become "His house". We become the dwelling place of the Holy Spirit. The next time my son wrestles me, and walks on top of me, I'll tell him, "Watch out! This is holy ground!"

Paul says, "We are carefully joined together in him." The NASB says, "carefully being fit together." That's a beautiful picture of what God is doing with us. When we moved into our home, we made a trip to IKEA to pick up some furniture for our home. Each piece in the boxes was carefully crafted to be put together in a certain way, so it would fit together perfectly to accomplish its purpose. That's what God is doing with us. He says, "I made you on purpose and for a purpose. I saved you for a special purpose. You belong. You matter. Now, come on in and join the party."

Today, you may feel out of place in your world. Maybe your coworkers leave you out of the happy hour hangouts. Maybe your family isn't calling you over for game nights. Maybe your neighbors don't invite you over for the neighborhood block party. If these sound familiar, you're not alone.

My challenge for you today is to get reconnected with the local body of Christ. God has you where He wants you. He has made you a citizen of Heaven. So reconnect with the local body of Christ, in whatever form is available for you.

I also invite you to take time and interact with us in goTandem. I'd love to get to know you there, and see how God is fitting you together in the family of God.