



## Leaders

### OPEN

Go around and let everyone answer...

Describe a time when you felt very far away from a person who you loved.

### DIG

Read EPHESIANS 2:17-22

*<sup>17</sup> He [Jesus] brought this Good News of peace to you Gentiles who were far away from him, and peace to the Jews who were near. <sup>18</sup> Now all of us can come to the Father through the same Holy Spirit because of what Christ has done for us.*

*<sup>19</sup> 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. <sup>20</sup> Together, we are his house, built on the foundation of the apostles and the prophets. And the cornerstone is Christ Jesus himself. <sup>21</sup> We are carefully joined together in him, becoming a holy temple for the Lord. <sup>22</sup> Through him you Gentiles are also being made part of this dwelling where God lives by his Spirit. (NLT)*

What is it like to feel far from God? (2:17)

Whether you have been far from or near to God, what does the Apostle Paul say makes it possible to come close to God now? (2:18)

From your experience or observations, what is it like to be a stranger and foreigner? (2:19)

List all of the different illustrations this passage uses to describe how you can be connected to God. (2:19-22)

Which of those illustrations is the most meaningful to you and why?

How are people of different backgrounds, who may feel like strangers or outsiders, be accepted in your church?

### APPLY

How near did you feel to God in your early life? Describe it on a number scale from 0 (far) to 10 (near).

On a scale of 0 to 10, how near do you feel to God now?

How can your group pray for you so that you can be more aware of God's nearness?

### Series

This discussion guide follows the theme of a sermon in a series called "Deep and Wide." It examines the living message and practical applications of the Apostle Paul's letter of Ephesians.

### Big Idea

This lesson highlights the difference in being far from God or near to him.

### Prayer

Pray for every person to understand God's love that allows us to come near him regardless of our past.

### Group Leadership

When a person is missing from your group meetings, make sure someone from the group follows up to encourage the person. If a person would like a different group experience, give them the freedom and encouragement to find a group in which they can serve better.