**1. Motivate**

A video introduction to the lesson is
available. View it at <https://watch.liberty.edu/media/1_mszaj37m>
If you have no Wi-Fi where you teach, better to download to your computer from <https://tinyurl.com/yb644nc4>

When have you felt most at home with a group of people?

* family reunion
* people you work with
* friends you went to school with (high school, college)
* people you served in the military with
* friends you have studied the Bible with
* your Sunday School class (Connect Group, Small Group, etc.)
* people you knew way back when
* people with whom you went through some trauma together

**2. Transition**

For people who have come to faith in Christ we belong to a unique group

* Not only are we members of a local congregation …
* We also become a part of the Body of Christ – that group of believers the world over.

**3. Bible Study**

3.1 Christ Head of the Church

Listen for Christ’s relationship to the Church.

Ephesians 1:20-23 (NIV) which he exerted in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, 21 far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every title that can be given, not only in the present age but also in the one to come. 22 And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, 23 which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.

What two events related to Christ does Paul cite to describe the greatness of God’s power given to those who believe?

* God the Father raised Jesus from the dead
* then He seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly realms

Over what realms and for what times has Christ been exalted?

* Jesus is placed as King and Ruler
* above all other rulers and authorities
* above all other powers and dominions
* above all others with titles of authority of any kind
* above all authorities in past, present, and future times

What does it mean for Christ to be head over all things to the church?

* Christ is the supreme authority of the Church … all believers of all time … of all denominations
* Jesus is in charge
* He has the power and authority to carry out His purposes and plans
* He has the wisdom to accomplish His purposes and plans

If Christ is the head and the church is His body, what implications does that have for how the church functions?

* the Church must bow to His authority
* all believers and congregations must follow His commands, His purposes
* we trust in His guidance
* we depend on His strength and wisdom in all activities and ministries

How is being a part of a church different from being a part of any other organization?

* our Leader is God, Himself
* our Leader has the power and authority to accomplish His purposes for us as individuals, as local congregations, as a denomination, and as a world wide Body of believers
* our Leader loves us supremely (in contrast to most earthly leadership who are so often self-serving)

What happens when we forget that Christ is the head of the church?

* we fail
* we become discouraged
* we go off in directions that accomplish little
* we can become confused

How does the knowledge of God’s authority and control make you secure?

* we often give up on the human leadership we encounter
* we can depend on God’s leadership
* when we remember that God is in control, we need not despair
* we can be encouraged to know that the One who is in charge, loves us supremely
* in the midst of all the current events that seem out of control (pandemic, attacks on our culture, polarization of politics) we can rest assured that God is still in control
* He will accomplish His purposes no matter what human or satanic evils arise

How can we make Christ the Head of *our* *lives* as individuals?

* daily worship Him … be in awe of who He is and what He has done
* praise Him, thank Him … don’t take His blessings for granted
* submit to Christ, to His leadership in your life
* daily communication with Him …
* reading, meditating on God’s Word
* talking to God … Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving, Supplication (ACTS)

When the Spirit of Christ *fills* our lives, how will our lives be different?

* victorious Christian living
* witnesses to a hurting world
* active in the furthering of God’s Kingdom
* faithful use of our resources in glorifying God and building the Church

3.2 God’s Grace

Listen for God’s gift.

Ephesians 2:8-10 (NIV) For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith--and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God-- 9 not by works, so that no one can boast. 10 For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

 List the critical words you see in verse 8.

* grace
* saved
* faith
* gift

How do they relate to each other in the salvation experience?

* we are saved by God’s *grace* – His love and blessings on us that we do not deserve
* our salvation is a *gift*, we cannot earn it
* we respond to God’s remedy to our sin problem by *faith* … we declare our belief in Jesus’ death and resurrection which paid the penalty we deserve

 For what purpose have we been saved?

* to do good works
* we are not saved *by* good works
* we are saved for the *purpose of doing* good works
* we follow God’s plans for us in service and ministry – to one another as members of the Body of Christ – to unbelievers, bringing them to Christ

What do these verses teach us about God’s grace?

* GRACE … **G**od’s **R**iches **A**t **C**hrist’s **E**xpense
* God bestows blessings on us – salvation most importantly – even though we don’t deserve it
* God’s love is expressed to us without requirement or guarantee of reciprocity
* that love is expressed to *all* people … whether they receive Him or not
* Jesus died for the sins of *all* men, women, and children … whether they respond in faith or not

Why is it important for us to know that we are God’s workmanship, God’s work of art?

* we find purpose in life
* we should not be down on ourselves
* God has given each believer one or more Spiritual Gifts/Abilities with which we minister to one another in the Body of Christ
* we are a specially designed “tool” in the hands of the Master Artist
* He uses our abilities, even our disabilities to accomplish His purposes

3.3 Members Together in God’s Household

Listen for who we are in Christ.

Ephesians 2:19-22 (NIV) Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow citizens with God's people and members of God's household, 20 built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. 21 In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. 22 And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.

What images did Paul use to describe the union of all believers in Christ?

* foreigners
* aliens
* citizens
* family members (members of God’s household)
* foundation
* cornerstone
* building, temple, dwelling

Whom does he identify as the foundation of God’s holy building?

* apostles
* prophets
* Christ Himself, the chief cornerstone

What do you think is the significance of Christ as the corner stone?

* the other “walls” are lined up on Christ
* if you remove that one stone, the whole building might crumble
* His place in the church is a place of prominence and honor

What can we do to continually align ourselves with Christ, the Cornerstone?

* read and heed His teachings
* talk to Him in prayer
* be sensitive to the urgings of His Holy Spirit
* apply the Truth you receive in preaching services, in Bible study groups

Consider the importance of “fitting together” of different elements of the structure of a building … prevents leaks, shifting, collapse. What kinds of attitudes or actions sometimes need to be adjusted in our lives so that we “fit together” with other believers?

* set aside attitudes of self-importance
* respect for other people’s opinions
* realization that when we get to heaven, none of us will be 100% correct on our theology
* appreciation for the skills God has given to others
* willingness to minister where needed
* willingness to use the Spiritual Gifts God has given us

Use the last page as a handout so your learners can take home the application points of this week’s lesson.

Application

Confess**.**

* Adopt a right mindset of your part in Christ’s church.
* Confess any wrong attitudes you hold (or have previously held) about individuals in your local church.

Submit**.**

* Read Ephesians 1:20-23 again and reflect upon the power and authority of Jesus Christ.
* Submit your life to His authority and control.

Commit**.**

* If you’re not a member of a local church, pursue membership to begin experiencing the beauty of living together” in the household of God.
* This might mean going through a membership class or talking to a pastor.
* If you’re already a member, commit yourself anew to the covenant and mission of your church.

Let’s see this “TO” must go in that next to the last row all by itself. Then I’ll look for two and three letter words and see what makes sense. All the letters in your puzzle fell straight down, so that’s better than how those letters over there are all JOINED TOGETHER. Joni Eareckson Tada is the person who is quoted.

