

No Barriers –Series # 53
Ephesians 2:14-15
September 18, 2005 – Josiah Bancroft Preaching

Scripture Text: - Ephesians 2:14-15

For he himself is our peace, who has made the two one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, by abolishing in his flesh the law with its commandments and regulations. His purpose was to create in himself one new man out of the two, thus making peace,

No Room For Edith

- 1) Take a moment and reflect on the message(s) in this morning's drama.
- 2) Often a church like "Gracious and Artsy Fellowship" thinks of itself as taking down barriers, but as we see, it can often be a way of putting new ones up. What are the pros and the cons of "targeted ministry?"

Unwritten Rules

- 3) Have you ever found yourself in a position of violating an unwritten rule or norm? Dare you share the story?
- 4) It is a bit too easy for us to point out the unwritten rules of other people, churches and cultures. Instead, consider for a moment the unwritten rules that govern your life. How have they affected the relationships of your life? Example: Expectations brought in to a marriage or a job.
- 5) Could your group identify 3 "unwritten rules" or barriers at Grace? What is one project that you could undertake as a group or as individuals to "destroy the barrier"?

Bound Together Through Relationship

Josiah presented the relationship he has that resulted from the marriage of their children as a model of how we are bound together in relationship with people that we may otherwise never know through our mutual relationships with Jesus.

- 6) As a group, rephrase his illustration in personal words. Any parents of married children that have experience the same thing?
- 7) Who would it be hard for you to be related to by marriage? Or by mutual faith in Christ?

Prayer Together

In the course of your prayer time tonight, spend some time reflecting on and praying for the future direction of your group. Attached is a sample group covenant that could help guide discussion. Is there potential to multiply a new group from current membership so others can participate?

Sample Group Covenant Serendipity Small Group Ministries

Any group can benefit from creating a group covenant. Reserve some time during one of the first meetings to discuss answers to the following questions. When everyone in the group has the same expectations for the group, everything runs more smoothly.

1. The purpose of our group is:
2. The goals of our group are:
3. We will meet for ____ weeks, after which we will decide if we wish to continue as a group. If we do decide to continue, we will reconsider this covenant.
4. We will meet _____(weekly, every other week, monthly).
5. Our meetings will be from _____ o'clock to _____ o'clock, and we will strive to start and end on time.
6. We will meet at _____ or rotate from house to house.
7. We will take care of the following details: [] child care [] refreshments
8. We agree to the following rules for our group:
 - **PRIORITY:** While we are in this group, group meetings have priority.
 - **PARTICIPATION:** Everyone is given the right to their own opinion and all questions are respected.
 - **CONFIDENTIALITY:** Anything said in the meeting is not to be repeated outside the meeting.
 - **EMPTY CHAIR:** The group stays open to new people and invites prospective members to visit the group.
 - **SUPPORT:** Permission is given to call each other in times of need.
 - **ADVICE GIVING:** Unsolicited advice is not allowed.
 - **MISSION:** We will do all that is in our power to start a new group.