

Welcome to Enemies No More. I have written this Life Group Series because I love the Church! Not just my local congregation, Christ Church, but the invisible Church made up of every person around the world who confesses Jesus as their Savior and Lord. I believe that God is raising-up the Church for “...*such a time as this.*” *Esther 4:14*

I believe that we are in the beginning stages of a world-wide renewal in the body of Christ that will not only lead to unprecedented conversions but to the transformation of nations. In many places around the world, people are already experiencing a supernatural outpouring of the Holy Spirit. This renewal of the Church will not look like anything we’ve ever experienced before because it will cross every boundary of denomination, country, ethnic background and social status. It will be characterized by an overwhelming experience of the grace of God and yet there will be a cost. The status-quo that is so prevalent in the Christian Church today will no longer do. This move of the Holy Spirit will call upon every “believer” in Jesus to become a “transformed follower” of Jesus.

This Transformation Church Life Group Series is based on the book of Ephesians. This passionate letter by the Apostle Paul has been called the “jewel of the New Testament.” As we shall see, it is also a veritable blue-print for the transformation of cities and nations. Ephesians lifts up truth from God’s Word that is desperately needed in the Church today. It strongly reinforces our calling as Christians to both unity and action for the sake of our witness to the world. Its message is as relevant today as it was nearly 2,000 years ago.

The pivotal verse for this series is *Ephesians 2:14*. Referring to Jesus and his finished work on the cross, Paul declares, “*For he himself is our peace, who has made the two one and destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility...*”

We will discover that Transformation Churches today are on the front-lines of confronting the “*dividing walls*” that continue to undermine the witness of the Church and the peace and unity of our cities and nations. These “*dividing walls*,” as described in Ephesians are: **individual, racial, denominational, relational, generational, societal and spiritual**. Christians are called to take the lead in breaking down these barriers that still divide us! We must declare that “in Christ” we are Enemies No More!

Only then will we “...*be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power.*” Only then can we “...*put on the full armor of God*” with our rightful authority in Christ and win the battle against “...*the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.*” *Eph. 6:10-12* Only then will we experience authentic and lasting transformation in our homes, churches, cities and nations.

Special Thanks to Ed Silvos, my spiritual father, mentor and friend for his encouragement and support of this project and the generous use of his books and teaching on transformation. Thanks to my wife, Colleen, for her steadfast love, faithfulness and encouragement of my writing. Thanks to my daughter, Sarah, for the Enemies No More logo and cover design. Thanks to my Administrative Assistant, Donna Lohse, for the editing, lay-out, charts and graphics. Thanks to my church family at Christ Church in Otsego, Minnesota, USA, where we continue to discover what it means to be a Transformation Church. And, thanks to my friends and partners in transformation both locally and around the world. I am blessed and inspired by your amazing testimonies. Let’s continue to “go for it” in Jesus’ name!

Greg Pagh

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<i>Session</i>	Dividing Wall	Gaps Represented	Scripture Memory	Personal Life Application Challenge	Group Life Application Challenge	City Transformation Life Application Challenge
1. <i>(p. 11)</i>	Individual	God — Humankind	Eph. 2:8-10	Commit to the Discipline of Daily Devotions and Prayer	Complete the Life Group Roster	Read the entire Letter to the Ephesians
2. <i>(p. 25)</i>	Racial	Insiders — Outsiders	Eph. 2:14	Identify your Circles of Influence and Racial/Ethnic Divisions	Begin reading “Prayer Evangelism” by Ed Silvano	Implement a Strategy to knock down Racial Walls
3. <i>(p. 41)</i>	Denomina- tional	Clergy — Laity	Eph. 4:3-6	Commit to the Discipline of Scripture Memory	Prepare a card to encourage a local congrega- tion	Complete reading “Prayer Evangelism” by Ed Silvano
4. <i>(p. 61)</i>	Relational	Husbands — Wives	Eph. 4:32	Re-commit to the Discipline of Daily Devotions and Prayer	Implement and report on Inten- tional Acts of Kindness	Encourage a City Leader
5. <i>(p. 79)</i>	Generational	Parents — Children	Eph. 6:1-4	Initiate an Intergenerational Conversation	Plan a fun Life Group Event	Implement Prin- ciples of Prayer Evangelism in your home
6. <i>(p. 101)</i>	Societal	Owners — Workers	Eph. 4:28	Meditate on the Prayer of St. Francis	Respond to a “felt need” related to Per- sonal Poverty	Engage with issues of Systemic Poverty in your city
7. <i>(p. 121)</i>	Spiritual	God — Humankind	Eph. 6:10	Underline “Spiritual War- fare” Scriptures in your Bible	Pray against a specific “Spiritual Stronghold”	Be “on duty” as a Messenger of Peace in your city
8. <i>(p. 143)</i>	Enemies No More		Eph. 3:17b-18	Unity Transformation		

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Life Group Roster

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Introduction

(Please read these materials prior to Life Group Session #1)

Introduction to Ephesians: Saul was a Jewish Rabbi who persecuted and murdered Christians during the first generation after the life of Jesus on earth. One day he was traveling from Jerusalem to Damascus to arrest the Christian believers who lived there. Along the road he experienced a blinding light and heard the voice of Jesus speaking to him from heaven. *(Acts 9)*

Saul was converted to Christianity and became known in the days and years that followed as the Apostle Paul. He became a passionate follower of Jesus and went on to lead thousands to Christ. His various missionary journeys led to the establishment of many churches from Israel to Asia, from Italy to Spain. He wrote many of the Epistles or letters found in our New Testament to help teach and disciple these young Christian communities as their pastor.

Most scholars conclude that Paul's letter to the Ephesians was written during his two-year imprisonment in Rome about 60-62 A.D. Ephesus was a large and important city and a natural connecting point for Christian churches that were springing up all over the province of Asia. During his travels Paul had spent more than two years in Ephesus preaching and teaching the Word of God. *(Acts 19:10)*

God did extraordinary miracles through Paul. Many people came to Christ including Jewish leaders, Greek citizens and even sorcerers. A riot took place in Ephesus when a group of local craftsmen felt that their livelihood was threatened by Paul's stance against man-made gods, particularly the goddess Artemis. *(Acts 19:23-41)* Paul was subsequently beaten and put on trial in Jerusalem for similar accusations that followed him there. *(Acts 21:27-36)*

In the days ahead God protected him through imprisonment, shipwreck, a poisonous snake-bite, further beatings and constant accusations. Even so, the scriptures state: ***“Boldly and without hindrance he preached the kingdom of God and taught about the Lord Jesus Christ.”***
Acts 28:31

Reflect: Can you recall a time in your life when you have suffered for being a Christian? How did God help you through it? What did you learn from it?

Series Overview and Schedule

The Enemies No More Transformation Church Life Group Series includes:

- Weekly Worship and Sermon Series
- Weekly Life Group Sessions (2 hours)
- Life Application Challenges
- Bible Memory Verse Challenge
- Daily Devotions including Scripture Reading and Prayer

Worship and Sermon Series themes focus on transformational teaching from the book of Ephesians. Life Group participants are encouraged to be faithful in attending weekly worship opportunities where the pastor will share the foundational message for the Life Group session that follows. Every Life Group participant will be challenged to break down the “dividing walls of hostility” within their own Circles of Influence.

Transformed Thinking and **Transformed Living** sections of each Life Group session are designed to review the biblical foundation and teaching for the week, provide opportunities for personal reflection and group discussion, as well as lead to daily life application. It is helpful if Life Group participants read the upcoming session in advance. This will allow more time for discussion of key points when your Life Group is together.

Session Themes for Enemies No More are as follows:

Knocking Down the Dividing Walls of Hostility

- Week One *Individual Walls*
- Week Two *Racial Walls*
- Week Three *Denominational Walls*
- Week Four *Relational Walls*
- Week Five *Generational Walls*
- Week Six *Societal Walls*
- Week Seven *Spiritual Walls*
- Week Eight *Enemies No More*

Life Application Challenges allow each person to take the key biblical principles of the week and apply them immediately to their daily life. This application may occur in the home, neighborhood, workplace, school, shopping center, place of recreation or church lobby. Near the end of each session you will be provided with *Personal... Group... and City-Transformation* Life Application Challenges. By implementing these challenges throughout the week you will develop practical life skills, your confidence and testimony will grow and you will be used by God to bring transformation to your Circles of Influence.

Daily Devotions include Scripture Reading and Prayer will build upon the weekly Life Group sessions and contribute to ongoing personal transformation. Life Group participants are encouraged to incorporate this “good habit” into their daily routine. A weekly reading plan is included with each session along with questions for reflection.

A **Bible Memory Verse Challenge** will encourage Life Group participants to memorize key Bible verses throughout the series. The Bible says that we are to store-up the Word of God that we might be “*ready to give an account of the hope that is in us.*” *1 Peter 3:15*

Scripture Quotations in this series are taken from the New International Version (NIV) of the Holy Bible (International Bible Society, 1973, 1978, 1984) unless otherwise noted. They are typed in bold italics. Any underlining has been added to bring emphasis.

Transformation Church Life Group Series by Dr. Gregory M. Pagh are available as free and reproducible downloads or for purchase in hard copy through www.christchurchotsego.org or at www.transformourworld.org under the Transformation Churches page. Sermon resources for pastors are also available in audio form, along with outlines and answer sheets.

Other Transformation Church Life Group Series include **Faith Beyond Belief** (foundational teaching on biblical paradigms and principles of transformation) and **At a Crossroads** (characteristics that define Transformation Churches from I and II Corinthians - to be released during the summer of 2011) A full description of these resources and others is included at the websites.

Acknowledgements: The foundational teachings for this series are credited to my spiritual father, mentor and friend, Ed Silvano, the President of Harvest Evangelism and the International Transformation Network. Excerpts and quotes are acknowledged from the books *That None Should Perish*, *Prayer Evangelism*, *Anointed for Business*, and *Transformation*, all published by Regal Books and used by permission of the author. Quotes from other authors are also acknowledged appropriately at the place of their use.

A Word to Life Groups

You are in for a blessing! A Life Group is just what the words imply. It's a group of people who make an intentional commitment to share life together. God made us for relationships. A Life Group gives you the opportunity to make new friends, share faith, provide support and work together to be a blessing to others.

Life Groups come in a great variety of shapes and sizes. Most groups will involve 3-12 members so that everyone can participate fully. Life Groups can be formed by couples, singles, men, women, youth, children, families, interest groups, ministry teams, workplace groups and various combinations of any of these.

This Enemies No More series is designed to provide an 8-week "all-church" emphasis that begins with a Sunday morning sermon and worship theme followed by Life Groups that meet throughout the week. The Life Group sessions build upon the Sunday messages, providing opportunity for further study, reflection and application of the transformation principles found in the book of Ephesians.

The Sunday sermons by Dr. Greg Pagh are downloadable in audio form at www.christchurchotsego.org and www.transformourworld.org under the Transformation Churches page. They may be used devotionally, as further background listening for Life Group participants or as a "starting point" for pastors to contextualize their own messages around the paradigms and principles of transformation from the book of Ephesians. As previously mentioned, sermon outlines and answer sheets are also available for each message.

This "Sermon Series/Life Group" format is not required in order to use this Enemies No More resource. This study can easily be adapted to a variety of congregational, marketplace and community settings. For example, Life Groups that meet for breakfast or lunch and have limited time can easily divide the series into sixteen sessions instead of eight. The natural break in each session comes between the Transformed Thinking and Transformed Living sections. The key is that everyone in the group is committed to participate faithfully, openly and with the best interest of the whole group in mind.

Regardless of the format that works best for your Life Group, it is strongly recommended that you continue your commitment to one another beyond this series. Transformation is an ongoing process that requires the long-term love and support of the kinds of friends that you will make in your Life Group. Remember, Jesus said, "***Where two or three gather together in my name, I will be there.***" As you meet together you can expect the presence and power of God to be at work!

A Word to Life Group Leaders

Thank you for serving as a Life Group Leader. You will play an important role in facilitating the study sessions and overseeing details related to the meeting location and hospitality.

Each session is broken up into eight main sections:

- Sharing Life
- Transformed Thinking
- Transformed Living
- Life Application Challenges
- Prayer Support
- Details
- Memory Verse Challenge
- Daily Devotions

Within each of these sections there are simple directions provided in bold print, such as **Gather, Read, Discuss, Quote, Transformation Church Insights etc.** There are also a number of charts that summarize and spur discussion as well as opportunities to write and reflect. (Several charts are included in the **Appendix**.)

As you prepare for your weekly Life Group session, please review the next session in advance and determine how you want to facilitate each section. (Life Group participants should also be encouraged to read the next session in advance.) For example, what will you read as the leader, ask others to read, or read as a whole group? How will you draw out discussion among all the members of your group? How will you monitor the clock and keep things moving?

You will discover that there is a minimum of “direction giving” in order to provide the greatest flexibility to your Life Group. As the Life Group Leader it is your responsibility to keep the sessions flowing within the designated time frame for each section so that the group doesn’t bog down on any one point. Highlight in advance sections to re-read as a group or key points to emphasize. You will not have time to dwell on each discussion question. Once there have been several good answers, move on to the next question or section to read or discuss. At the same time, be flexible and open to “Holy Spirit moments” and “God surprises.”

If refreshments are served, it is suggested that this be done as Life Group members first gather, as a brief break between the Transformed Thinking and Transformed Living sections, or at the end of the session. This is a deeper study. It will require an average of 1 ½ to 2 hours of concentrated group time for each session.

To be effective, each session must be bathed in prayer and the power of the Holy Spirit. You are encouraged to pray for your Life Group members every day. Ask the Lord to give you wisdom in facilitating each session to gain maximum participation and impact for the kingdom of God. In order for the transformation paradigms and principles from the book of Ephesians to “go deep” in the lives of your group members, they must first experience their application within the safety of the Life Group.

You will find that as you “share life together,” the Lord will open up many opportunities for ministry to take place within your Life Group. Utilize the gifts and resources of your group to minister to one another and then encourage each person to reach out to others through the Life Application Challenges. Remind your group of the importance of confidentiality when personal matters are shared. Help create a fun and accepting atmosphere of growing together in Christ.

Your pastor or Life Group Coordinator may provide additional orientation and training that responds to your local needs. There are a great variety of resources available today for the equipping of Life Group Leaders. Thanks again for serving as a Life Group Leader and may God bless your time together!