

I. REVIEW

- A. Last week, we explored Ephesians 2:1–10, where Paul contrasts our former life apart from Christ with the transforming work of God's grace. He reminded us that we were once spiritually dead in our sins, but because of God's great mercy and love, He made us alive together with Christ, raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly realms.
- B. Paul also revealed two primary reasons why God did this:
1. TO SHOW US HIS KINDNESS FOR ETERNITY
 - a) ***"⁷ That in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus."-Eph 2:7***
 2. MAKE US HIS MASTERPIECE AND POEM CREATED FOR GOOD WORKS
 - a) ***"¹⁰ For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them."-Eph 2:10***

II. SUMMARY OF EPHESIANS 2:11-22

- A. Ephesians 2:11–22 is one of the clearest passages in the New Testament showing that Christ's work on the cross accomplishes both a vertical reconciliation with God, and a horizontal reconciliation with one another.
- B. Paul emphasizes that the cross not only reconciled people to God, but also reconciled people to one another creating a brand new humanity with divine privileges including becoming a temple for God's Presence.
- C. While Paul previously in the letter focused on our individual condition apart from Christ and the personal blessings of salvation, he now shifts his attention to our corporate condition and calling as the people of God.
- D. In Ephesians 2:11–3:19, Paul shows how Christ not only reconciles us to God individually, but also unites us together into one new humanity, one family, and one dwelling place for God by the Spirit.

1. ***"For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free—and have all been made to drink into one Spirit."-1Cor 12:13***

III. EPHESIANS 2:11-22

1. ***"¹¹ Therefore remember that you, once Gentiles in the flesh—who are called Uncircumcision by what is called the Circumcision made in the flesh by hands—¹² that at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. ¹³ But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. ¹⁴ For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, ¹⁵ having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace, ¹⁶ and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity. ¹⁷ And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those who were near. ¹⁸ For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father. ¹⁹ Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, ²⁰ having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone, ²¹ in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, ²² in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit."***

IV. (VRS 11) THEREFORE REMEMBER

- A. The key word in this section is *therefore*, which is a call to reflect on what Paul has just said in the previous verses. Having described the riches of God's grace, mercy, and kindness in Christ, Paul reminds us that we can only fully appreciate these blessings by remembering what God's grace rescued us from.

1. Remembering our former condition produces humility and gratitude. We can't live grateful in the present unless we remember who we used to be in the past.

V. (VRS 11-12) FIVE COVENANT PRIVILEGES GENTILES DID NOT POSSESS THAT ISRAEL DID

1. SEPARATED FROM CHRIST

a) ***"that at that time you were without Christ"***

(1) Lost, vulnerable, spiritually sick, and sheep without a shepherd.

(2) No national hope centered in a Messiah

2. ALIENS FROM THE COMMONWEALTH OF ISRAEL

a) ***"being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel "***

(1) Gentiles had no part in the promised blessings and privileges that Israel had

3. STRANGERS TO GOD AND COVENANTS

a) ***"strangers from the covenants of promise"***

(1) Gentiles were not part of God's covenants including the Abrahamic, Mosaic, and Davidic promises.

4. WITHOUT HOPE

a) ***"having no hope"***

(1) Biblically and practically, hopelessness is one of the most destructive conditions of the human heart because hope is what sustains perseverance, faith, and purpose.

(2) Hopelessness produces despair, fear, discouragement, boredom, ungratefulness and aimlessness of life..

5. WITHOUT GOD IN THE WORLD

a) *without God in the world*

- b) The reason we had no hope is because we didn't know the one that gave it.

(1) ***"Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit."-Rom 15:13***

VI. (VRS 13) BUT NOW IN CHRIST

- A. The words **"But now in Christ Jesus"** mark one of the most dramatic turning points in Scripture. They reveal the passionate and compassionate heart of God, who stepped into humanity's desperate condition, and turned our separation into reconciliation, our hopelessness into hope, and our alienation into belonging.
- B. Paul contrasts the hopeless condition of verse 12 with the glorious reality of verse 13. Everything changes because of those two words: **"But now."**

VII. IN VRS 13-22 PAUL DESCRIBES WHAT THE BLOOD OF JESUS DID

A. (VRS 13) BROUGHT US NEAR (CHANGED PROXIMITY)

a) *"you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ."*

2. Where our sin separated us from God, His blood brought us back to close proximity and nearness.
3. Jesus is the ultimate fulfillment of the story of Mephibosheth in 2 Samuel 9. Mephibosheth was crippled, living in a desolate place, cut off from his inheritance, and without hope. Yet King David sought him out, extended undeserved kindness, and brought him to the king's table, where he would sit in a place of honor and feast continually.
4. In the same way, Christ sought us when we were spiritually broken, far from God, and without hope, and through His grace He brought

us into His family, restored our inheritance, and gave us a permanent place at the King's table.

B. (vrs 14-16) MADE PEACE AND BROKE DOWN THE WALL

a) For He Himself is our peace,

2. **Peace is not something, it is someone.** Jesus is the preeminent Son of God because He is the ultimate peace maker. He made Peace between us and God and between Jew and Gentile

3. His peace torn down prejudice and racism and made a new humanity called the "One New Man"

a) *14 and has broken down the middle wall of separation,¹⁵ having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace,¹⁶ and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity.*

b) In the Temple courtyard there were walls that separated the Jews from Gentiles, and women. The wall was a stone barrier called the **soreg**, and it is very likely that Paul is referring to this wall.

(1) There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.-Gala 3:28

c) Martyn Lloyd-Jones pointed out that Christianity does not merely improve humanity, it creates a new humanity.

VIII. **PAUL DESCRIBES THE NEW HUMANITY'S PRIVILEGES IN VRS 18-22**

1. Paul presents four privileges and vivid pictures of the new humanity in Christ including a people with access to God, fellow citizens in God's Kingdom, members of God's household and family, and living stones in God's temple where His presence dwells by the Spirit.

B. (VRS 18) A PEOPLE WITH ACCESS TO GOD

- a) ¹⁸ ***For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father.***
2. Jesus' death on the cross tore the physical veil in the temple as a sign that God invites humanity into His Presence because of the blood.
 - a) This is one of the greatest privileges of the Christian life. The word "**access**" means the right of entrance into the Manifest Presence of a King. Place of encounter!

C. (VRS 19) FELLOW CITIZENS

- a) ***Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints***
2. In this new body and humanity believers stand with equal rights and have all privileges of God's Kingdom. *This is legal language whereas the next description is more intimate language.*

D. (vrs 19) MEMBERS OF THE FATHERS HOUSE

- a) ***members of the household of God,***
2. The phrase refers to **belonging to God's family**. Paul moves from the image of a kingdom ("fellow citizens") to the more intimate image of a household.
3. This speaks of belonging, acceptance, provision, protection, relationship, and intimacy

E. (vrs 20-22) LIVING STONES FITTED A HOLY TEMPLE

1. _Paul then describes this new humanity as a buildings temple with its primary purpose to host the glory and manifest Presence of God
 - a) ²⁰ ***having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone,*** ²¹ ***in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord,*** ²² ***in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.***

