

# Ephesians: Good News of the Church

## Ephesians 2:11 - 22

"Members of God's Family" – September 25, 2022



### **Introduction**

Last week, we looked at Ephesians 2:1-10 which is about a vertical reconciliation between sinners and a holy God. The topic in verses 11-22 is still about reconciliation, but it is a horizontal one.

Christ has declared peace. He has accomplished this by His death and resurrection. Sadly, much of the world hears this declaration but sees it as a lie from the enemy. They refuse to trust Christ. They see others as the enemy. We see alienation on a personal level - quarrels between friends and family. We see it on a national level with political division. We see it on a global level with nations at war with each other. You don't have to look far to see this alienation.

Shouldn't the church be different? Yes. Here, Paul is reminding us of the good news of peace so that the church could live out this peace together. This isn't easy. How is a diverse church to live in peace with each other? How did we go from hostility to peace?

### **Sermon Outline**

1. Remember who you were. Vs. 11-12
2. Rejoice in Christ who made us one. Vs. 13-18
3. Realize who you are now. Vs. 19-22

### **Read & Discuss**

#### **1) Read vs. 11-12**

Paul tells the Gentile Christians in Ephesus to remember the ways in which they were alienated. They were separated from Christ. They were alienated from the commonwealth of Israel. They were strangers to the covenants. Do you remember what your life was like before you trusted Christ?

What is the result of this? They were without God and having NO hope. Do you know the dark and desperate terror of being hopeless? Why does Paul want us to remember that? If you forget where you came from, you may begin to think you deserve what you have. Pride and arrogance take over.

For some of the Jews, circumcision was just an outward symbol. The goal is always a heart change. The starting point to live in unity is humility. Pride will destroy it. This message is for everyone in the church! It is easy to see the offense of another and not see the sin in our own lives.

In the things that matter most, those who seem different than you are just like you. In our origin and our need for Christ, we are all the same. The foot of the cross is a great equalizer.

#### **2) Read vs. 13-18**

Verse 13 summarizes the change that has taken place. The "far" and "near" are relational not geographical. In Christ, God brought Jew and Gentile near to each other and to Himself. This peace is described three times:

-Christ is our peace. Vs. 14

The Old Testament law functions in different ways. Jesus didn't abolish its ability to instruct us. He set aside the law as the old covenant. Jesus came to fulfill the law and bring in a new covenant. ([Matt. 5:17](#)).

We are made to be relational. Nothing feels more dehumanizing than the breaking down of human relationships. It doesn't matter what "good things" we do, we will never fulfill our sense of "fitting in" by ourselves. ([Ecc. 3:11](#)) The only way is to find relationship with God. Trying to validate ourselves in the wrong way is exhausting. What are some of the ways you may have tried to "fit in" or have your sense of self validated?

-Christ created peace. ([Romans 8:1](#))

-Christ preached peace. ([John 20:19](#)) Jesus still preaches peace today whenever the Gospel is proclaimed.

God has made us one in Christ! If God has made us one, we must work through things that threaten to divide us. Living together, united as one is hard. Is there another member of this church that you find difficult to love? Do you ever think, "I can't believe I go to church with people who think this or that?" It's going to happen. If disagreement on a secondary issue begins to boil in your heart, turning it to animosity, ill will or distrust, you may be in danger of rebuilding the dividing wall of hostility that Christ died to break down. This is no small matter. A commitment to work toward unity - bear up - be forgiving - isn't just accepting what Christ gives us - it is accepting Him. He is our peace.

We are different, and that is a good thing. Relationships are hard work, but they are worth it. The unity in diversity showcases the value of Christ. Do you sometimes feel like giving up on relationships? Go back to vs. 11-12 and remember. Then re-read vs. 13-18 asking God to open the eyes of your heart until you rejoice in Christ. Then the important, but secondary issues will not matter.

**Additional Reading: Acts 21; Genesis 12**

**3) Read vs. 19-22**

Once you were alienated. But now you are:

- Fellow citizens ([Phil. 3:20](#)) – Our citizenship is in heaven. We are members of the household of God. We are family! We must work on relationships with family because that is what family does. Is there anyone in the family with whom you are in disagreement to the level of disunity? What can you do this week to facilitate reconciliation?

- A holy temple - Our foundation is God's word. The cornerstone is Jesus. We are the bricks for the temple. ([1 Peter 2:5](#)). We must learn to carry out God's purpose together. Our differences shouldn't be ignored, but they shouldn't define us. If anything other than Jesus defines us, we must repent. Have any of your "passions" ([James 4:1](#)) opinions, views, etc. risen to the level of idolatry in your heart, causing disunity with another believer?

We aren't who we once were. Christ's sacrifice was costly enough to pay for the price of our unity. What fuels this building project? It is the Holy Spirit.

**Prayer of Response**

1) After hearing God's Word, what sin do I need to confess? From what do I need to *repent*?

2) How should my life be lived this week based on what I have heard? What should I *understand, believe, desire, or do*?

Spend time praying together in response to God's word asking for His help and greater faith to follow Him in the week to come.

If you missed the sermon on Sunday or would like to listen again, visit our website at <https://fbcum.org/sermons-new/>

<b>*Next week's sermon text:</b> we turn to <a href="#">Ephesians 3:1-13</a> "God's Wisdom on Display"
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