
Ephesians

Chapter 2

Ephesians, Chapter 2

Ephesians 2:1

And you (hath he quickened) who were dead in trespasses and sins."

and you reference to Paul's addressees, believers in Asia Minor, and ultimately, all believers in Christ.

(hath he quickened) this phrase does not appear in the Greek. It has been added by the KJV translators because the verb appears a few verses down and is put in here by reference, for clarity.

were dead (eimi + nekros), "were dead".

TOPIC: DEATH (esp. spiritual death)

Rom. 6:23; Prov. 21:16; Rom. 8:11

in trespasses and sins (paraptwma + hamartia): "a stumbling aside; fault; offense; transgression" plus "sin, offense"

The locative case implies location, hence, "in the sphere of..." Every human being is spiritually dead because of sin.

Rom. 4:25; 2 Cor. 5:19; Eph. 1:7

Ephesians 2:2

Wherein in time past you walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now works in the children of disobedience:

wherein in time past "formerly, in the sphere of".

This verse is a reference to the Christian's manner of life before his salvation.

you walked (peripatew), "walk; lifestyle".

Eph. 4:22; Col. 1:21; 3:7; 1 John 5:19

References to a sinful manner of life: Jer. 7:23-26; Phil. 3:16-19

Contrast this "walk" with "walking worthy of the vocation with which you are called" of Ephesians 4:1.

The Greek word (**anastrephw**) is used in Eph. 2:3 for "a pattern of social life", and is translated "conversation" or "walk" in other passages.

The word (**stoikew**) means "to follow a definite course of action"; used for the procedure followed in a military drill. Rom. 4:12; Phil. 3:16; Gal. 6:16

TOPIC: WALKING

according to the course of this world: (kata + aiwn + kosmos). Thus, "according to the age of this world system"

This is a reference to the universe under the control of Satan and his forces. The concept includes the idea of Satan's thoughts, his viewpoint, his doctrines, his plans and strategies, his religions, his solutions, etc.

Living as part of the world system is described in these passages: Matt. 13:22; 16:26; Rom. 12:1,2; Col. 3:2; 2 Tim. 2:4; Titus 2:12; James 4:4; 1 John 2:5-17; 1 Sam. 8:19; 2 Kings 17:15.

according to the prince (kata + archon), "according to the highest ruler".

The archon was the chief ruler of the Greek city-state. Historians do not refer to these individuals and "kings", because this type of ruler did not obtain his position through inheritance. He took over by coup d'etat or by conquering.

This highest ruler of the world system is Satan. He is in the picture in the previous chapter and in chapter 6.

of the power (exousia), "delegated power; the ability and authority to perform an action".

Satan is the chief ruler of all the subordinate demonic powers.

of the air (aeros), the lower or dense part of the atmosphere. In classical Greek, this word

was used to refer to the dwelling place of evil spirits.

the spirit (pneuma), “breath, spirit, being”; also refers to “state of mind”.

We use the word spirit for state of mind: “He was mean-spirited. She had a kind spirit.”

In this context, spirit speaks of the state of mind that originates with Satan and is characteristic of those who are disobedient to the will of God.

This state of mind has been fostered by the “prince of the power of the air”, Satan, whose kosmos (worldly) doctrines lead people into disobedience.

that now works, pres. act. part. of (**energew**), “now operational; now working; now effective”

Satan is presently working in the world to promote his own state of mind, his own teachings and doctrines.

in the sons of disobedience (huios + apeitheia). “the sons of obstinacy.

Heb. 4:1-6. In Heb. 4:6, unbelief is **apeitheia**.

Both believers and unbelievers can be obstinate, unbelieving. In Eph. 4:17-19, Paul warns Christians that their manner of life must not parallel that of the unbelievers in that they fail to grow in Christ and be renewed in their minds.

This obstinacy leads to ‘vanity’ or ‘futility’, an emptiness in the soul into which Satanic doctrines can penetrate. A believer influenced in this way can have a daily walk that is indistinguishable from his former manner of life before he became a Christian.

Titus 1:15,16

SEE: Notes on Titus 1:15,16.

Ephesians 2:3

Among whom also we all had our conversation in the lust of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.

among who also we - reference to the environment of a person as an unbeliever. The relative pronoun “whom” refers to the “sons of disobedience”. We were all there when God’s

Grace found us. We were all under the control of Satan and the Sin Nature.

Titus 3:3-7

had our conversation: (anastrephw) “formerly lived”, “manner of life in social living; the practicing of certain principles.” Hence, the pattern of behavior or conduct of the unbeliever.

Rom. 6:1-14; Col. 3:1-10; 2 Peter 1:1-9; Jer. 7:21-28; Romans 3:1-23

in the lusts of our flesh (epithumias teis sarkos), lust patterns in the sin nature.

Prov. 16:25,26

Rom. 6:12, “Let not sin reign...!” How?

Rom. 7:5ff; Rom. 8:1-7; Rom. 13:14; 1 Cor. 10:1-12; Gal. 5:16-26

Topic: SIN (see esp. the discussion of the Sin Nature)

fulfilling (poiew), “doing”.

The only emphasis of this verb is simple “doing.” Both KJV “fulfilling” and NAS “indulging” are attempts to add meaning to the word. The person who is controlled by his sin nature “does” what the desires of his mind dictate.

the desires (theleima), “desires”.

People do what they want to do; but they don’t always want to absorb the consequences of their actions. The lifestyle of the sin nature is a frantic search for happiness through the details of life.

But this search leads to misery long before happiness is realized.

of the flesh (sarkos), “flesh”.

The production of the sin nature, whether moral or immoral! The sin nature produces both sin and human good. This is an important distinction. Not everyone is a wanton, dissolute unbeliever. There are many upright unbelievers who have personal integrity, good character, and high ethical standards.

But a good person is still doing what he wants to do, apart from divine guidance. It’s just that his areas of weakness are not as noticeable as some other people’s.

After salvation, a believer tends to continue in the same pattern of living, until he begins to

“walk worthy of the vocation” with which he is called (Eph. 5:1).

Christian growth (edification) leads a Christian into producing “good works”, divine good.

of the mind (dianoia), a compound which means to “think through” something, to plan.

The unbeliever plans his deeds in advance, good or evil, and carries them out.

and were by nature (fusus), “natural condition; inherited endowment”.

The sin nature is inherited from Adam.

1 Cor. 11:14; Gal. 2:15; 4:8; James 3:7; 2 Pet. 1:4

the children of wrath (teknon + orgei), “those who will experience the wrath of God.”

John 3:36; Rom. 1:18; Rom. 2:5-8

even as others

Rom. 8:7,8; 1 Pet. 1:13-16; 1 Pet. 2:11,12

Ephesians 2:4

But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us.

But God - the contrast is between what we were like when God found us and what God is like.

who is rich “who, being rich...” “Rich” is (**plousios**), “wealthy” [English cognate: “plutocrat”]

We share through all eternity everything that God has in abundance: love, mercy, justice, holiness, will always be available to us.

Considering these things, the details of life can be enjoyed to their fullest if they are made secondary to occupation with Christ, that is if our permanent happiness is derived from the inner life. But God is able to share His happiness, His wealth, with us even when we have lost details of life. Circumstances change, but the wealth of God is unchangeable.

in mercy (eleos), “kindness, mercy”, a benefit which results from compassion.

2 Cor. 8:9; 1 Tim. 6:17; Ex. 33:19; Rom. 2:4.

for His great love “because of His great love” **wherewith He loved us (agapao)**.

God’s love for us does not depend on us.

We were not worth loving when God loved us. We were completely under Satan’s influence. We were totally obnoxious to God. Even our good works were, to say the least, unacceptable.

Isa. 64:6; Rom. 3:10-18

The theological term for this condition is “Total Depravity”.

However, God loves us unequivocally. His love depends on His character, not on ours. He is an initiator of love, not a responder.

We, on the other hand, sell our love. If we don’t get immediate dividends or long term benefits from our loving, we stop giving it out. As soon as our love is unrequited, we begin to lose interest. In fact, we often turn to hatred of the same person. We are love dispensers; put in a coin and out comes love.

From Dostoevsky, *The Brothers Karamazov*, “...I want to be paid at once. I want to be praised, to be paid for love with love. Otherwise, I’m quite incapable of loving.”

Because we are this way, we think that God’s love has to be purchased. We think that He will respond to us. So we try to bribe God with our love by offering Him good works.

But God loved us with maximum love even when we were His enemies; and He loves us now as His children, even while He is chastening us.

Topic: ESSENCE OF GOD

Ephesians 2:5

Even when we were dead in sins, has made us alive together with Christ (by grace ye are saved),

even when “at the time”. That is, at the time that God loved us...

we were dead (nekros), “dead”. We were totally alienated from God, totally unattractive to God, spiritually death.

READ Eph. 2:11 to the end of the chapter.

in sins (parapiptw), “sin, transgression, fault, a defection”

READ Rom. 5:6-10

has made us alive together with Christ (sudswpoiew). This is sun + zw + poiew, or, "with + life + to make"

Note: in this notation for the Greek, the "w" is used for the Greek letter omega.

Hence, "to make alive along with Christ"

1 John 5:11-13 And the witness is this, that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life. These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, in order that you may know that you have eternal life.

for by grace - instrumental singular of (**charis**). The instrumental case indicates that the noun is the means by which an action occurs. Therefore, "by means of grace you are saved".

Topic: GRACE

you are saved - perfect passive participle of (**swdzw**), "you are brought to a place of safety; you are delivered from danger"

Note: the verb is in the passive voice, which means that the subject of the verb "you" receives the action of the verb, i.e., we do not save ourselves!

Topic: SALVATION DOCTRINES

Ephesians 2:6

And has raised up up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus;

and has raised up together (sunegeirw), "to raise up with someone".

Verse 6 is a continuation of a sentence begun in verse 4. This phrase speaks of the reality of our union with Christ.

Col. 2:9-14, "For in Him all the fulness of God dwells in bodily form, and in Him you have been made complete, and He is the head over all rule and authority;

"and in Him you were also circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, in the removal of the body of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ;

"having been buried with Him in baptism, in which you were also raised up with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead.

"And when you were dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He made you alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our transgressions,

"having canceled out the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us which was hostile to us; and He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross."

READ Rom. 6:1-23

Application:

Col. 3:1-4, "If then you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.

"Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth.

"For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God.

"When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory.

and made us sit together (sunkathidzw), "to sit together with someone".

in heavenly places

The "heavenly places" is the location of divine blessing, including all the blessings of Christian maturity

Eph. 1:3; 1:19-23

This is the locale of the Lord's success in spiritual warfare against Satan, Psalm 103:19.

Heaven is the location of the believer's position in Christ. Thus, the believer shares the victory of Christ. The result is daily victory in the believer's life. Eph. 2:6.

The "heavenly places" is the sphere of angelic activity, Eph. 3:10.

The "heavenly places" is the battlefield for spiritual warfare during the present age, Eph. 6:12 ff.

in Christ

TOPIC: Union With Christ (Positional Truth)

Ephesians 2:7

That in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.

There is a reason for our having been raised up to the throne of God.

that - a Greek preposition here introduces a purpose clause.

in the ages to come (**en + aion + eperchomai**). “In the approaching ages”. This is a reference to the future, beginning now and extending into eternity.

he might show (**endeiknumai**), “to demonstrate, to manifest”.

Believers will be part of a demonstration of God’s grace throughout all eternity. This has particular consequences in the resolution of the angelic warfare, as God’s fairness and grace are demonstrated to Satan and his “principalities and powers.”

the exceeding (**huperballw**), “to throw beyond; to surpass”

This word is used as a participle modifying the word "riches". God's riches are superabundant.

riches - again, (**ploutos**), “riches”. See verse 4.

of His grace - genitive of (**charis**)

in His kindness: (**chreistoteis**), “goodness, kindness, gentleness”

God’s goodness is a combination of His grace thinking and merciful actions. Because God loves us, He shows us His goodness; but always through Jesus Christ.

toward us through Christ Jesus.

Because we are believers in Christ, we are in Christ, and we are members of His body. God judged His Son, Jesus Christ, for us. He was our substitute on the Cross. Therefore, God can be good to us without compromising His perfect justice or righteousness.

Ephesians 2:8

For by grace are you saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God,

for by grace

Topic: GRACE

are you saved

Victory begins here. Union with Christ guarantees that Christians are winners, permanent-

ly. We can stay in the winner’s bracket because grace provided everything for us.

Topic: SALVATION DOCTRINES

through faith

The means of entering God’s plan is a non-meritorious system of thinking.

Topic: FAITH

and that not of yourselves, it is a gift of God.

Topic: LEGALISM

Ephesians 2:9

Not of works, lest any man should boast.

not of works: not of human good.

Human works are dead to God because they come from the Sin Nature. Isa. 64:6.

It is essential for a Christian to begin “thinking Grace” as quickly as possible.

Heb. 6:1, "Therefore leaving the elementary teaching about the Christ, let us press on to maturity, not laying again a foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God,"

lest anyone should boast, (**kakaomai**), “to boast”. Human good promotes boasting and pride. Grace is the opposite of boasting and pride. Grace promotes humility, growth, and divine good.

Topic: PRIDE

Ephesians 2:10

For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God has before ordained that we should walk in them.

for we are - (**eimi**), verb of absolute condition.

His workmanship: (**poeima**), “a product that is the result of labor; workmanship”.

Therefore, “We are continually the result of His work.”

created in Christ Jesus for good works: (**ktidzw**), with several meanings.

1. “To reduce from a state of disorder, to produce order out of chaos.”

2. "To call into being", i.e., the new birth means we are called into God's family.
3. "To invest with a spiritual frame", 2 Cor. 5:17, new creatures, created in Christ Jesus.

Topic: UNION WITH CHRIST

which God has before ordained that we should walk in them

Topic: THE CHRISTIAN WALK

See also notes on Eph. 2:2,3.

There are three spheres to the believer's walk:

Walking in Faith Rest: we walk by faith, not by sight

2 Cor. 5:7

Walking in the Spirit

Gal. 5:16-18, "But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh.

For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please.

But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the Law."

Walking by Learning Doctrine

3 John 1:3,4, "For I was very glad when brethren came and bore witness to your truth, {that is,} how you are walking in truth.

I have no greater joy than this, to hear of my children walking in the truth."

Ephesians 2:11

Wherefore remember that you, being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands -

The Gentiles are being asked to recall a situation which previously existed, that they were totally alienated from God and were held in total disdain by the Jews who were God's chosen people.

The Christian life was a great change of situation for Gentiles, and it required them to remember their former alienation from the things of God.

There was a Legal Barrier; the Jews held up the Law of Moses to Gentiles as a basis for spirituality.

There was a Moral Barrier; the Jews were highly moral (on paper), while the Gentiles had no moral code (by Jewish standards) and were regarded as lascivious.

And there was a Ceremonial Barrier: circumcision, a false barrier which had nothing to do with the inner life. There was a great haughtiness toward those who did not have "the mark." Read Romans 2 regarding the differences between legalistic circumcision and the "circumcision of the heart".

The Gentiles in local churches were being victimized by the false standards of the Jews, especially regarding ritual circumcision. The Jews were often superficial and unspiritual, speaking disparagingly of Gentiles as pagans, heathen, instead of thinking of them as people to share Christ with.

But the Greeks and Romans, themselves, were just as guilty of racism. The Greeks despised those who live outside their city-states, even other Greeks. They called them pagans (**ethnoi**).

Clashes were inevitable. There was tremendous antagonism.

But everyone comes into life with a mass of prejudices. The problem is only cured by having one's viewpoint changed by the Word of God.

Unity is one of the objects of Grace. By Grace, people can have a high regard for each other and work together productively, regardless of race or background.

READ Eph. 4:11-16

The apostle Paul did not condemn circumcision. It was, after all, a God-given sign of the covenant. But the outward sign was not matched by inward faith and obedience. Thus it was worthless, a "work of the flesh."

There are great lessons here for Christians today. We are highly prejudiced against other people, especially those who don't think the way we do or act the way we do. "Stronger" brethren despise "weaker" brethren. But the teaching of Romans 14 is vital here. We are all "weaker" brethren in our personal areas of weakness. And we all have "strengths". But it is self-righteous and unloving to despise others' weaknesses as if we ourselves have no areas of weakness.

1 Cor. 7:17-24, "Only, as the Lord has assigned to each one, as God has called each, in this manner let him walk. And thus I direct in all the churches.

Was any man called already circumcised? Let him not become uncircumcised. Has anyone been called in uncircumcision? Let him not be circumcised.

Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but what matters is the keeping of the commandments of God.

Let each man remain in that condition in which he was called.

Were you called while a slave? Do not worry about it; but if you are able also to become free, rather do that.

For he who was called in the Lord while a slave, is the Lord's freedman; likewise he who was called while free, is Christ's slave.

You were bought with a price; do not become slaves of men.

Brethren, let each man remain with God in that condition in which he was called."

Gal. 5:6, For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything, but faith working through love.

Gal. 6:12-18, Those who desire to make a good showing in the flesh try to compel you to be circumcised, simply that they may not be persecuted for the cross of Christ.

For those who are circumcised do not even keep the Law themselves, but they desire to have you circumcised, that they may boast in your flesh.

But may it never be that I should boast, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.

For neither is circumcision anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation.

And those who will walk by this rule, peace and mercy {be} upon them, and upon the Israel of God.

From now on let no one cause trouble for me, for I bear on my body the brand-marks of Jesus.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brethren. Amen.

Ephesians 2:12

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.

that you were at that time: (ekeino choris).

(**ekeino**) is a demonstrative pronoun used to refer to a thing previously mentioned. This is speaking of the time when the Gentiles were unsaved, outside of the Plan of God.

(**choris**) means "parted from" or "apart from". From (**choridzw**), "to separate; to disunite".

excluded from: nom. pl. masc. perf. pass. part. of (**apallotriow**), "to be alienated from; to be a stranger to; alien"

the commonwealth: (politeia): "citizenship; a community; the state of being a citizen"

The English word "commonwealth" is made up of "common" and "weal" ("good"), referring to citizens united in a community for the common good. The American states of Kentucky, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, and Virginia are officially known as Commonwealths.

of Israel: Gentiles were not citizens of Israel. They were, in fact ...

strangers: (zenoi): "foreigners; barbarians"

to the covenants: God's promises to Abraham, Moses, David.

Almost all Gentiles were unaware of the promises of God to Israel. So they had no way of knowing the teachings or the prophecies of the Old Testament, except in cases where Jews were faithful in communicating truth to Gentiles.

having no hope: (elpis). Having no basis for confidence.

Topic: HOPE

and without God in the world.

This passage is one of the most dire and gloomy in Scripture in describing the plight of a person without Christ. The hopelessness and despair that unbelievers feel, when they think of the afterlife or the future, can be crushing. Thank God for the great hope and confidence which is available in Christ, as expressed in the remainder of this chapter.

Ephesians 2:13

But now, you who were sometimes afar off, are made nigh by the blood of Christ.

But now you who formerly were far off

This is a reference to Gentiles who are now saved by Grace. It is speaking of a time in the past when Gentiles had been on the wrong side of the Barrier between God and man, but now because of the Father's provision of a Savior, the barrier has been removed.

Topic: BARRIER: RECONCILIATION, PROPITIATION

have been brought near: aorist passive indicative of (**ginomai**), "to be brought near."

This means to be somewhere you have not been before. The passive voice of the verb indicates that God is the one who brings a person near to Himself.

"Far off" and "near" are in contrast. The new believer has seen the Barrier removed, so he is now able to approach God without fear.

by the blood of Christ - a representative analogy set up in the Old Testament.

Topic: BLOOD OF CHRIST

Jesus Christ removed the barrier between man and God; and he broke down the wall separating Jews and Gentiles. It was the blood of Christ that was the ransom price for redemption, Eph. 1:7.

The Jews were monotheistic, moral, and had a worship centered in legalism. The Gentiles were polytheistic, immoral, and had a worship centered in immorality. Both were brought into union with Christ at salvation. There is now no distinction.

Ephesians 2:14

For he is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of partition between us.

for he himself is our peace: this is peace in the sense of reconciliation; the removal of the barrier reconciles man to God. "He keeps on being our peace."

It is the individual to whom God gives peace, not a group. God has no plans to bring about happiness or peace by changing people's social status or organizational affiliation through

salvation. The Lord's plan is to give every believer happiness, joy, peace, all the fruits of the Spirit and blessing of Christian living, in the present situation.

The Peace of God is a relaxed mental attitude which does not depend on people or circumstances to maintain it.

Topic: PEACE

who made both groups into one and has broken down the barrier of the dividing wall.

The temple of the Jews had an outer court for Gentiles and an inner court for Jews. A Gentile could be killed for going any further inside than he was supposed to.

But now there is no basis for discrimination; every believer is "in Christ." While no human beings are born equal in any sense of the word, all Christians are "born again" and equal in the sense of spiritual birth.

The Christian Jew has no right to say "keep out" to the Christian Gentile.

Ephesians 2:15

Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of two one new man, so making peace:

having abolished in his flesh: from (**katargeo**): "to render useless"

The thing being abolished was "the enmity". And it was Jesus Christ's own work, in His own body, on the Cross, that accomplished this. He abolished the barrier between God and man, and between man and man (Jew and Gentile). The Cross cancels the barrier. Therefore, the Cross is the only way to have peace with God.

Topic: THE BARRIER

the enmity: (**ton ekhthran**). This is the opposite of love (**philia**). To have enmity means to live in hostility to someone, to think of someone as an enemy.

Gal. 5:20; Prov. 6:19, compared with Prov. 1:23.

Between Jew and Gentile there was a "middle wall of partition", a separation set up by Jew-

ish law but now broken down by the work of Christ.

Topic: LAW OF MOSES

Moral people are often legalistic, arrogant, and self-righteous. The first part of Romans 2 deals with this type of judgmental self-righteousness on the part of the one who points the finger of blame at an immoral person, yet "does the same things".

Self-righteousness is a product of pride and produces enmity. This is seen in the disdain and indignation that is often characteristic of this type of sinful mental attitude. The self-righteous man judges another as if he, himself, was free of sin.

However, there was a an even more formidable barrier broken down at the Cross, the enmity between God and man caused by man's sin. Christ died for us when we were His enemies.

READ James 4:4; Romans 8:7

Topic: ENEMIES, Witnessing to

The antidote to arrogance, legalism, self-righteousness, and enmity is the Word of God. When a Christian learns the Word of God, and is controlled by the Holy Spirit, there is a rapid growth in the qualities of consideration and love which are the opposite of enmity. The "fruit of the Spirit ... love, joy, peace ..." is the result of growing in Christ.

so making peace: (eireinei).

Peace is one of the most wonderful results of the work of Christ and Christian growth. To "make peace" is to "bring about or establish the condition of peace." There is both a figurative or spiritual peace and basic human harmony as results of God's work of peace-making.

Topic: PEACE

even the law of commandments contained in ordinances

This is a reference to the law of Moses. Jews were grievously offended by Gentiles who "had no law". There has never been a social division as sharp as that between Jews and Gentiles. Yet God found a way, through Jesus

Christ, to make "both one" in Christ, to form unity out of diversity.

to make in himself of two one new man

We are "created in Christ Jesus unto good works" (Eph. 2:10). We have become the "new man, who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of his creator" (Col. 3:10). This is also a reference to "the new man, created in the likeness of God in righteousness." (Eph. 4:24).

A paraphrase of Ephesians 2:8-15

"No one can pride himself upon earning the love of God. The fact is that what we are we owe to the hand of God upon us. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do those good deed which God has planned for us to do.

"Do not lose sight of the fact that you were born "gentiles", known as "the uncircumcised" by those who were circumcised. You were without Christ; you were utter strangers to God's chosen community, Israel; and you had no knowledge of, or right to, the promised agreements. You had nothing to look forward to and no God to whom you could turn.

"But now, through the blood of Christ, you who were once outside the Pale are with us inside the circle of God's love in Christ Jesus. For Christ is our living peace. He has made a unity of the conflicting elements of Jew and Gentile by breaking down the barrier which lay between us. By his sacrifice he removed the hostility of the Law, with all its commandments and rules, and made in Himself out of the two, Jew and Gentile, one new man, thus producing peace."

Ephesians 2:16

And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the Cross, having slain the enmity thereby.

And that he might reconcile: (apokatalasw). "to reconcile; to change mutually"

Dictionary: "to restore to friendship; to restore to a previous condition."

Compare Ephesians 1:10 with Colossians 1:20.

The whole universe is to form a unity which has its goal and foundation in Jesus Christ.

Reconciliation restores those who are at extreme odds. "For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his

Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." (Romans 5:10)

READ 2 Cor. 5:17-21 for the process by which reconciliation takes place.

Topic: RECONCILIATION

both: in this context, one of the most important word in New Testament theology.

BOTH Jew and Gentile need reconciliation to God!

There is no room here for arrogance, class pride or envy, or any other distinction. READ Romans 3. "What then, are we better than they? God forbid, for we have before proved that they are ALL under sin."

unto God: that is, "with God".

Jew and Gentile are changed to a standard which God has set up, namely, his own perfect righteousness.

Here is the process of Reconciliation:

2 Cor. 5:18-21: And all things are of God, who has reconciled the world unto himself by Jesus Christ, and has given to us the ministry of reconciliation;

That is, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and has committed unto us the word of reconciliation.

Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.

For he has made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."

in one body

READ 1 Cor. 12:1-14.

by the Cross

The work of Christ for redemption made these things possible.

having slain the enmity thereby.

(See discussion of verse 15)

Ephesians 2:17

And came and preached peace to you who were afar off, and to them that were near.

The coming of Christ meant that peace could be preached to them which were far off, the Gentiles, those who had previously had "no hope" and were "without God." And peace

could be preached to those "that were near", the Jews, who had the "covenants of promise" and were the people of God.

For both, this was peace with God, which both groups needed alike. And the result is that there was the opportunity for concord between the two groups as well. Through the Cross of Christ peace was made, and Christ, through His church, brings out the message of reconciliation and peace to the world.

READ Acts 20:32; 2 Cor. 5:18-20

Ephesians 2:18

For through him we both have access by one spirit unto the Father.

For through Him: through Jesus Christ.

By means of Christ, unity is achieved between Jew and Gentile.

we both have access: (prosagwgei), "the way in; the approach; the landing place".

John 10:9, "I am the door; by me if any man enter in (prosagwgei)..."

Rom. 5:1,2, "Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God through out Lord Jesus Christ, by whom also we have access (prosagwgei) by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God."

READ Heb. 10:19-22.

by one Spirit unto the Father.

Entrance into union with Christ is by means of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit, 1 Cor. 12:13. When we are saved, we are placed into Christ permanently by the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the seal, the pledge, or our inheritance, Eph. 1:13,14.

Ephesians 2:19

Now, therefore, you are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God;

Now, therefore: Greek is "so then", or "consequently".

Those who are in Christ have experienced a profound transition from a state of enmity and strangeness to the condition of being members of the same family.

Here Paul speaks further of the change in the believer's status and position.

you are no longer: (este ouketi), literally, speaking of time, "no longer; never again".

The emphasis here is that there is no way to revert to a former state of being or condition.

strangers: (zenoi), "alien".

Jesus Christ does away with xenophobia, the fear of strangers. Strangers become family members, fellow citizens. Those who are outside are admitted to fellowship.

foreigners: (paroikoi), "outsiders".

In a Greek inscription, this word was used to refer to a licensed practitioner who, although he was a foreigner, was permitted to stay in the community to practice his trade.

Here, the word is used figuratively for Christians (Jews and Gentiles) who are now citizens of heaven.

but fellowcitizens with the saints: (sumpolitai), "members together of the same city", along with all believers in Christ.

Describing believers as citizens was an effective way to describe the position in God's kingdom that Jews and Gentiles now share equally.

and of the household of God: (oikeioi), from (**oikos**) = "house"

This phrase "of the household" was used literally in Greek literature to refer to family members, blood relatives. Here it speaks figuratively of members of the household of faith in Jesus Christ.

Galatians 5:10 uses the same word (oikeioi) speaking of the "household of faith".

Topic: CITIZENSHIP OF THE BELIEVER

Topic: FELLOWSHIP, CHRISTIAN

Ephesians 2:20

And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone,

What follows is another view of the great doctrine of Edification. Those whose faith is in Christ are like an edifice that is being built, the cornerstone and foundation having already been laid in place.

and are built: (epakodomeithentes), "built on something"

The verb is aorist passive participle, indicating that the subject, "you" of verse 19, receives the action of the built. That is, we do not build ourselves; rather, we are built by God.

The building process is described in Ephesians 4:11-16.

READ Ephesians 4:11-16.

Note the process:

1. The Lord Jesus Christ provided spiritual gifts of communication to the church, 4:11
2. The purpose of communication is (a) to bring "perfect" the saints so that the "work of the ministry" can be accomplished; (b) to edify the body of Christ; (c) to bring all believers into "unity of the faith"; and (d) to bring believers into maturity, a maturity which is measured by "the stature of the fullness of Christ."
3. The result of the edification of verse 12 is that Christians, who are becoming wise with godly wisdom, are no longer easily deceived by false doctrine, but
4. Mature Christians know and speak the truth from a spiritual framework of love, and continue to grow in Christ, who is the Head of the body.
5. The end result is a mature church, a body that functions together in concert and harmony, because every part is mature and working, and makes "increase of the body, edifying itself in the sphere of love."

There will never be a mature church without edified believers. And a believer cannot be edified apart from learning the word of God under the teaching and control of the Holy Spirit.

There are many Christian dabblers, religious buffs who like to hang around the edges of the Christian scene, or perhaps even "participate" to the full, but who are not daily involved in this edification process.

An understanding of the doctrines of the Word of God, and how they apply to every problem that comes up, or any decision that has to be made, is a prerequisite to real progress in the Christian life.

Topic: EDIFICATION

on the foundation: (themekiw), "a foundation"

A foundation is indispensable for any building.

apostles and prophets: the communicators who did the teaching.

Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone: (akrogwniaiou), "the high stone"

Jesus Christ is simply the "cornerstone". There is only one cornerstone, or capstone, in a building.

Ephesians 2:21

In whom all the building fitly framed together grows unto a holy temple in the Lord;

In whom all the building

Another reference to Union with Christ, positional truth. All activity in the Christian life is "in Christ".

All the building" refers to the edifice, the result of God's construction.

1 Cor. 3:9, "For we are laborers together with God; you are God's vineyard, you are God's building."

fitly framed together: (sunarmologoumenei): "joined together"

This word is also used in Eph. 4:16.

It is absolutely vital that you understand how the Lord brings Christians along in the Christian life and causes them to grow in "the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ". You can't grow in Christ by osmosis, or by putting your Bible under your pillow and learning in your sleep. There is a building process by which God uses His word to change us from naive babes in Christ into mature, productive witnesses and warriors for the faith.

grows into a holy temple in the Lord: "increases".

Notice in Eph. 4:11-16 how the Body of Christ grows.

John the Baptist said "He must increase; I must decrease." (John 3:30). First, Christ increases, then He causes us to increase.

What is being built here is a Church, a "holy temple", the temple of temples, the body of Christ. Of Christ and "in Christ".

Ephesians 2:22

In whom also you are built together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.

In whom also you are built together

We are being edified, built, for a great purpose: to be a habitation of God through Spirit. This phrase refers to various parts of a structure being brought together in a building. We are "built together" and we continue to be "built together".

What is our purpose in life?

Eph. 5:25-27, "...Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it. That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word; that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish."

It is God's plan for every Christian to be part of this process.

for an habitation of God: a dwelling place.

What do you make of the idea that you are God's dwelling place? Does that change your attitude toward your daily activities? Does this concept change your life goals?

If you think of yourself as God's dwelling place, does that help you make decision when you are tempted to sin, to dishonor God?

Remember from Titus 2, we are to live so as (1) not to cause the Word of God to be slandered; (2) not to give the enemies of the gospel any evil thing to say about us; and (3) to "adorn", decorate, the gospel of our Lord and Saviour.

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