



Bethany Bible Study & Discussion

Ephesians, Chapter 2 (verses 11-22)

UNION OF JEWS & GENTILES

Wednesdays
7.30-8.30PM

Blessings lost without Christ, and regained through His blood (11-13) Why is it important to remember, and what should we remember? What separated Jews from gentiles? What blessings are lost when we are without Christ? How are we drawn near to God?

Jews and Gentiles Reconciled (14-18): How is Peace accomplished? What specifically was achieved? What does 'one new man' 'one body' represent? Why was law a hinderance to the unity of Jews and Gentiles? Is the law now abolished and of no relevance? What was the cause of enmity with God? How is peace preached? How do we access the Father? How does prayer engage triune God?

Fruit of the Union (19-22): What do gentiles gain after the union? Do the Jews lose anything? Who/What constitutes the Church? What are unique aspects of 'church pictured as a building'? What are three attributes found in a healthy church? How are we God's dwelling place and how must it impact our life as individuals and a church?

Personal Reflection: Paul took us on a supernatural journey from **Death** to becoming **God's Dwelling Place** ... Have you experienced that journey yet? If not, what is hindering you?

5.5.21

Blessings **lost** without Christ, and **regained** through His blood (11-13)

Why is it important to remember, and what should we remember? What separated Jews from gentiles? What blessings are lost when we are without Christ? How are we drawn near to God?

Remember (11)

Remember ... we should not forget history (our past, and what the Lord did for us).

Such remembrance will fill our hearts with **gratitude and worship**, and take away any pride or self-righteousness.

Let us never forget, it is all by His grace
(by the grace of God, I am what I am ... I Corinthians 15:10)

Jews and Gentiles (11)

Gentiles were considered uncircumcised and not part of the 'chosen generation'. They did not have the mark and favor of God in their life.

- David mocked Goliath as uncircumcised (I Samuel 17:26)

Circumcised Jews were the chosen ones with special privileges (Romans 9:4,5); **Gentiles** were foreigners, second class people.

However, **True circumcision** must be of the heart (Romans 2:28,29) and not just outward physical sign or ritual or legalistic.

Life Without Christ (12)

Gentiles were without Christ.

Messiah promised to the lost sheep of Israel (Mathew 15:24)

All blessings are in-Christ; Without Christ ...

- (a) Aliens from the common wealth of Israel or church of the redeemed
- (b) No covenant promise ... the laws or the new covenant
- (c) No hope after death
- (d) No 'personal' God ... may worship idols as God ... but idols cannot speak or answer prayers or enjoy communion with man (Psalms 135:16-18)

But (13)...

Changes everything!

Once without Christ ... now made nigh (13)

How?

- Through the precious blood of Christ
- The gap is now closed (OT: we had Jews/Gentiles NT: One Church)
- There is no other way to draw near to God (John 14:6)

God is very nigh to His children ...

a very present help in time of trouble! (Psalms 46:1)



Jews + Gentiles Reconciled (14-18):

How is Peace accomplished? What specifically was achieved?

What does 'one new man' 'one body' represent?

Why was law a hinderance to unity of Jews and Gentiles?

Is the law now abolished and of no relevance today?

What was the cause of enmity with God? How is peace preached?

How do we access the Father? How does our prayer engage triune God?

For He is our Peace (14)

Peace is not achieved through works but a **Person**

- Our relationship with Lord Jesus Christ gives us Peace
- As seen before, it leads to Peace that world can never give (John 14:27)
 - Peace with God +
 - Peace with Others
 - + Inner Peace

Blessed Union of Jews & Gentiles (14-16)

Jews and Gentiles made One ... How?

By destroying the source of differences (secret of achieving unity in relationships ... identify the source and then destroy!)

- Broke middle wall of partition
 - In the temple, a physical wall prohibited gentiles access to certain areas
- Enmity between Jews and Gentiles abolished
- Law as a source of enmity/superiority/righteousness removed
- Reconciled Jews & Gentiles unto God in one body (the church)

Unity attained at the Cross. Cross becomes the new focal point, not culture or traditions or law or geography, etc.

Preached Peace (17)

Christ's first words after resurrection, **Peace** (Luke 24:36, John 20:19, 21, 26)

Good news that we proclaim is **news of Peace** (Acts 10:36)

Peace prophesied (Isiah 57:19, His name shall be called prince of peace)

14 – He is our Peace **15** – Made Peace **17** – Preached Peace

Prayer ... Trinity at work (18)

- To the **Father** ...(John 20:17, our father) (Romans 8:15, Abba father) (Mathew 6:9, Lord's prayer)
- Through **Christ** ... He is the mediator (John 14:6)
- In the **Spirit** ... our helper (Romans 8:26)

Fruit of the Union (19-22):

What do gentiles gain after the union? Do the Jews lose anything? Who/What constitutes the Church? What are unique aspects of 'church pictured as a building'? What are three attributes found in a healthy church? How are we God's dwelling place and how must it impact our life as individuals and a church?

Gentiles blessed after Union (19)

Citizenship (no more aliens)

Adopted into the family of God

Membership to Church

Church: Body of believers bought with the precious blood of Christ; Christ is the head of the Church

Church as a building (20)

What/Who is the Foundation?

Teachings of apostles and prophets (of NT), but Christ is the Foundation (I Corinthians 3:11, Mathew 16:18)

Teachings revealed the mystery

Apostles and Prophets didn't create, but built on the foundation

Cornerstone

Christ is the cornerstone who holds the structure together

As the chief, He has the preeminence and rules over all parts

3 Attributes of healthy Church (21)

Unity ... everything is held together (not loosely) but in perfect fit

Growth ... spiritual maturity and growth in numbers

Purity We are called to be holy, individually and as a Church

We are God's dwelling place (22)

This blessed place is the **dwelling place of God** through the Spirit
(I Corinthians 3:16, Church) (I Corinthians 6:19, individuals)

Church is **joined together** tightly (no missing pieces or gaps), and grows together because of the strong foundation



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