



## Ephesians Chapter 2 verses 11-22

### Background Detail :-

In these verses Paul is starting a new theme. From verse 11 onwards Paul is establishing the essential oneness that the church has through faith in Jesus Christ. Within the early church there was much suspicion and division between the Jewish side of the church and the Gentile. The Jews were held in great suspicion by many nations, as an oddball race who practiced strange rituals like circumcision, not eating pork and Sabbath observation. Yet the same was true of the Jewish Christians who saw the Gentiles as a Godless people, who worshipped idols and indulged in all manner of evil and debauchery. There was a real sense for the Jewish Christians that they were the chosen people of God, Jesus was their Messiah, and there was a deep fear of impurity if they mixed with these Gentile Christians. Into this mix of suspicion and hostility Paul writes these verses to teach the church about its true identity and how it is called to Godly unity despite barriers of race, culture and different religious roots.

### Discuss –

Do you think the church in general takes seriously this call to oneness and unity? If not why? If so how?  
Why do you think there are so many denominations and so much division on the church of Jesus Christ?  
How do you think we can promote unity and yet still hold out for what is important on issues such as truth?

### Read-Ephesians Ch 2 v 11 – 18

Paul in the first few verses from verse 11 is establishing the condition of the Gentile in regard to the previous covenant promises of God. What he declares to them is that as Gentiles they were not included within the covenant promises of God and had no hope of salvation. They were cut off from God and had no hope of restoration.

This for Paul is the wonder of God's mercy and love, that those who were not included historically within the promises of God are **NOW** included through a new and complete way opened up through the blood of Jesus. For Paul, he sees a new covenant formed by the blood of Jesus that enables people from every race and nation under heaven to be saved and bought into relationship with the one true God.

### Discuss – what do you think this should mean to our relationship with each other as God's people?

For Paul this understanding of both those who are far away (the gentile) and those who are near (The Jew) coming into a new covenant relationship with God through the one true way opened up through Jesus, meant that God was establishing a new humanity., in his Son, who would together represent and discharge His ministry in the world.

### Discuss –

How does it make you feel to know that you have been included into a new humanity in Christ?  
How do you think this new humanity is different from the old humanity that we have before we become a Christian?  
What do you think the repercussions are / or should be, of this new humanity in our daily lives? In our churches?

### From verse 15 onwards Paul defines for us something of what this new humanity is all about:-

**1) Verse 15 – Unity** and peace not only with God, but amongst all those who call themselves Christians. One nation of God's people under one Lord and Saviour of all. It Does not matter what your background, race or culture, we are one people in Christ. Therefore unity and brotherly love should be a real hallmark amongst the true people of God. This challenges us to deal with our attitudes and prejudices that can divide the church.

### **2) Verses 16 – 17 – Made right with God**

These verses make it clear that all people under heaven needed to be put right with God and that is only done through the complete sacrifice of Jesus. Whether you are far away (the gentile) or near (the Jews) Jesus has died to reconcile people to God. Only through Jesus death and His blood has a new way been opened up that can put us right with God and give us peace. There is no other name under heaven that a name can be saved. As Paul says in Romans 1 “ *For I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation, for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.*”

### Discuss

Why do you think many in the church have taught that it is possible all religions lead to heaven?  
How would you prove to these people that Jesus is indeed the only way?

### Read – Ephesians 2 v 18 – 22

### **3) Verse 18 – Access to God**

One of the core reasons that God has saved us through His Son, is so that we can have access to Him and have a real relationship with Him. A real Christian is someone who has access to Almighty God, through the new way that Jesus has opened up for us by His blood and body. We have been Born Again, made new with Jesus so that we can come to a place of intimacy with the God who created us. In this relationship there is victory over this world and specific blessings and privileges that God wants to give us as His children. This is why we have been given the fullness of the Holy Spirit.

### **4) Verse 22 – We are the dwelling place of God by His Spirit.**

This verse makes it clear that God Himself actually dwells within you and within the church, by His Holy Spirit. This is why we can become more the conquerors through Christ who loves us. This is why we can overcome the world and the problems in our lives.

### Discuss – do you think that we really live in the fullness of this reality of the indwelling presence of God?

How do you think this should change our lives and our relationships?

In what ways do you think we can really release the power of this reality in our daily lives as Christian?

### **5) Read verse 15 & verse 19 A new humanity**

**What God has done is that through His Son Jesus, through the teaching of the apostles and prophets, He has made and established a new race of people / a new humanity, who belong to Him and have right of access through Jesus.**