

Ephesians 2:11-22

Week 4 - One in Christ: God's Global Plan For Unity

Ephesians 2:11-22 (NIV)

¹¹ Therefore, remember that formerly you who are Gentiles by birth and called “uncircumcised” by those who call themselves “the circumcision” (which is done in the body by human hands)— ¹² remember that at that time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world. ¹³ But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near by the blood of Christ.

¹⁴ For he himself is our peace, who has made the two groups one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, ¹⁵ by setting aside in his flesh the law with its commands and regulations. His purpose was to create in himself one new humanity out of the two, thus making peace, ¹⁶ and in one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility. ¹⁷ He came and preached peace to you who were far away and peace to those who were near. ¹⁸ For through him we both have access to the Father by one Spirit.

¹⁹ Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God's people and also members of his household, ²⁰ built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. ²¹ In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. ²² And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.

? What does this passage say in v.11-13 about the condition of the Gentiles prior to Christ? What did they lack (and what did that mean for them)?

? Why do you think Paul is reminding the Gentiles of their story prior to Christ?

“Gentiles” referred to anyone who was non-Jewish. Circumcision set apart the Jews from Gentiles; in the Old Testament, God commanded circumcision of the Israelites as one way to distinguish them from the rest of the world to be His people. See Genesis 17.

? How does this passage remind you of your story, before and after being in relationship with Jesus Christ?

Read Ephesians 2:14-18 (NIV) again.

¹⁴ For he himself is our peace, who has made the two groups one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, ¹⁵ by setting aside in his flesh the law with its commands and regulations. His purpose was to create in himself one new humanity out of the two, thus making peace, ¹⁶ and in one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility. ¹⁷ He came and preached peace to you who were far away and peace to those who were near. ¹⁸ For through him we both have access to the Father by one Spirit.

? What are words, phrases or ideas that come to mind when you hear the word peace?

? What stood out to you from the video? How does the video add to our understanding of what peace is?

? What does this passage say that Jesus did to create peace, and what was the purpose of doing so?

? By pursuing peace, we can be like Jesus. What are some practical ways we can pursue peace (restoration to wholeness) in our lives?

Read Ephesians 2:19-22 again.

¹⁹ Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God's people and also members of his household, ²⁰ built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. ²¹ In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. ²² And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.

? What results from Christ's peace can be drawn out from verses 19-22? Is there a particular result described in the passage that stands out to you? If so, which one and why?

? According to this passage, how does God go steps beyond including more people into his family? How does this offer encouragement to us as individuals and as a small group?

? How might God's commitment to his people encourage us to commit to one another as a small group?

For Discussion and Accountability

? What prevents you from pursuing peace (restoration to wholeness) in your life?

? What challenges make it hard for you to feel as though you belong in God's family?