

Outline: “United”: Week 4 - Ephesians 2:11-22

Pastor Jordan offered the following general outline:

- In verses 11-13, we see the need for Christ to _____ our relationships.
- In verses 14 -18, we see _____ Christ reframes our relationships.
- And in verses 19 - 22, what our reframed relationships _____ in Christ.

Ephesians 2:11-22: 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.

- In Ephesians 2:11, Paul splits the world into two groups. What are they?
- What was the significance of circumcision to the Jewish people?

Ephesians 2:14-15a: 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.

- What, according to Paul, causes ‘the dividing wall of hostility’?
- How would the law, as a “dividing wall,” be felt in a literal sense for Jewish people?
- Who was separated into ‘courts’ from one another through the law’s ritual and moral purity code?
- How have laws, both written and unwritten, been something you have seen divide people in your own life?

Ephesians 2:15b-18: 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.

- How does the cross of Christ put an end to the law being as a dividing wall and thus ‘hostility’ and bring peace?
- Does this indicate that the law no longer matters for Jesus’ followers? Why or why not?

Ephesians 2:17-18: 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.

- In these verses who is considered ‘near’ and who is considered ‘far’?
- Why is both ‘being near’ and ‘being far’ an issue that needs to be remedied?

Romans 3:20-23: “...no one will be declared righteous in God’s sight by the works of the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of our sin. ²¹ But now apart from the law the righteousness of God has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify. ²² This righteousness is given through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference between Jew and Gentile, ²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.”

- What does Romans 3:20-23 tell us about the human ability to fulfill the law and thus live in God’s presence?
- What does this indicate about all other identities we have as individuals?

Ephesians 2:19-22: 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 being a ‘citizen’ and a ‘member of God’s household’ imply for followers of Jesus?
- What does it mean for us as individuals to be ‘built’ into something larger than ourselves with Christ as the cornerstone?
- How does this relate to being part of the “Church” in general and a local church in specific?