

REVIVE CHURCH- BROUGHT NEAR BY THE BLOOD OF CHRIST

EPHESIANS SERIES #9

Recap-. **Ephesians unveils the mystery of the church like no other letter. God's secret intention is made known and includes:**

1. Forming a body to express Christ's fullness on the earth.
2. Accomplishing this by uniting one people, both Jew and Gentile including 7 pictures of the church. All seven apply a different facet.
3. To equip, empower and mature the people of God to the end, that they extend Christ's victory over evil.

We left off in Ephesians 2 looking at the church as God's masterpiece. Together we are the masterpiece of God. He chose us, His redeemed people, the church to demonstrate His manifold wisdom to the entire universe, to the world and the unseen heavenly realms.

Moving on to the next section.

Ephesians 2:11-18 11Therefore remember that you, once Gentiles in the flesh—who are called Uncircumcision by what is called the Circumcision made in the flesh by hands— 12that 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. 13But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.

14For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, 15having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace, 16and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity. 17And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those who were near. 18For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father.

Paul is addressing every believer to live in that grace which transcends ethnic divide. This unity leads to the release of the Spirit's power through Christ's body, the church and makes way for God's full indwelling. We want to continue to apply ourselves to the unity of the body of Christ, with a greater understanding of the Fathers heart for oneness. Paul is not just addressing a problem that existed in his day and he is not speaking hypothetically. **Under the new covenant of Jesus Christ blood and through His death and resurrection, He has removed the barrier that has kept us from oneness in Him.**

Eph.2:11-12 11Therefore remember that you, once Gentiles in the flesh—who are called Uncircumcision by what is called the Circumcision made in the flesh by hands— 12that 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.

Paul reminds the Gentiles that they were formerly alienated from the Jews, the circumcision, (those who are of Jewish descent). **The Gentiles are described as being without Christ.** Though Gentiles and Jews are both lost without Christ there are some specific differences Paul points out that will help us be even more thankful that Jesus opened up the way for all to be saved through Him.

1. Jews expected the Messiah to come in the future, **Gentiles had no expectation of a messianic deliverer.**
2. Israel had the Old Covenant through which God worked and by which they could related to God. **Gentiles had no such covenant with God.**
3. Paul gives 8 distinctions of the Jewish people in Romans 9 that pertain specifically for Israel. **Romans 9:4-5-** 4who are Israelites, to whom pertain the **adoption**, the **glory**, the **covenants**, the giving of the **law**, the **service** of God, and the **promises**; 5of whom are the **fathers** and from whom, **according to the flesh, Christ came**, who is over all, the eternally blessed God. Amen.
4. As Gentiles we were aliens and strangers to all of these distinctions.

Paul reveals the picture of one/specifically Gentiles being outside of the realm of God's gracious hands of protection and promise. This results in a life that has no hope and is without God. The Jews experienced hope and God, and this was purposed to point them to the acceptance of Jesus as Messiah.

God chose to bring his Messiah into the world through a people group. Through humanity itself. The Jewish people are trustees, guardians and messengers of these gifts to the world.

The Bible cannot be fully understood without appreciating the place of Israel in his grand scheme – from beginning to end. Looking through the lens of his dealings with Israel is like a key that unlocks the scriptures.

13But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.

But now!! In the Gentiles embrace of Christ, they were no longer far off from God or the believing Jews. But now represents a dramatic breakthrough in the history of the ages and the expectations for the future. Gentiles (the majority of us in the room and a majority of believers on earth) are no longer alienated from the things of God because of the blood of Jesus

Christ. In other words the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ is what is required to make peace with God.

- We have to remember that first century Jews expected that only they would be a part of God's covenant community so this is massive in revealing the heart of God.
- Gentiles were excluded from being a part of the Jews unless they became part of the Jewish covenant community through conversion and circumcision.

God changed all this with the new covenant. Now everyone can draw near to God not by going through religious act like circumcision or law but only through the precious blood of Jesus Christ that is applied by faith. The same requirement is for Jew and Gentile.

Matthew 26:28- For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.

Near=positional change by the blood of Christ we have actually have fellowship with the person of Christ, to have friendship with God. Nearness to Christ is the place of victory, the place your enemy dare not go because his accusations fall to the ground in the presence of our Savior. There is something that we need to understand that is essential to our understanding of intimacy and unity. **The power of Jesus blood unites us, it draws us near to Him yet it also draws us near to one another.**

Eph. 2:14 For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation,

Gentiles were not allowed in the Jewish temple. There was a literal wall that separated Jews from Gentiles. The Romans would destroy this wall A.D. 70. The literal destruction of the wall gives us a visual picture of what happened when Jesus blood was poured out and He crushed the wall of separation through His finished work of atonement.

The Word states-He Himself is our peace. Jesus is our peace, this includes Jew and Gentiles. Peace is not a some-thing it is a some-One. In the process of breaking down the wall of separation, God brings the two groups together into one. Though we are not seeing the fullness of this oneness here and now we need to understand and believe that it has already been paid for and we will see this oneness happen before the rule and reign of Jesus Christ in the next age. Our oneness will be a sign and a wonder upon this earth that will move the heart of Jesus

Christ as a bridegroom for His Bride. Jesus is longing for this day that He receives the glory from His unified bride.

Eph. 2:15 having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace,

As the perfect man who fulfilled the requirements of the law, Christ also abolished the legal demand that one must conform to all the Scriptural requirements. Only through Christ does one find the fulfillment of the law. His holy life becomes the believers life when they believe in Him. There are no distinctions between the Jew and the Gentile based upon the law, these have been demolished in and through Jesus. **Those who are in Christ are brought together no matter ethnicity, gender or class distinctions that exist in the world.** We have peace through the blood of Jesus Christ within the Christian community regardless of what is happening in culture. Jesus sees all of us as His beautiful bride.

Galatians 3:28-29 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. 29And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

Eph 2:16-18 16and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity. 17And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those who were near. 18For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father.

Enmity or separation ended at the cross of Jesus Christ.

- Jesus died so that all could be saved and come into His family.
- Jesus brings people together through reconciliation that would not be united in any other way.
- Jesus death was characterized by shame and humiliation, considered a curse yet it alone has become the triumphant entry of the kingdom of God with great power.
- **The cross has completely broken down the barriers that kept us from accessing reconciliation with God and with one another.**

It is the powerful work of the Holy Spirit that accomplishes the ministry of Christ in both people, Jews and Gentiles. No group can claim superiority in standing before God. There is only One way to approach this throne of Grace, there is One way to be forgiven and accepted by God-through the blood of Jesus.

Home group questions

1. Discuss the distinction found in the Jewish Nation and why it is important for us as Gentiles to have understanding.
2. Discuss. The power of the blood of Christ to tear down the wall that separates us from God and the Gentiles from Jews.
3. Discuss-Peace is a person!
4. Discuss the power of the blood drawing us near not to the law but to the very person of God in Jesus Christ. Are you abiding in daily fellowship and intimacy with Holy Spirit?
5. Discuss-No group can claim superiority in standing before God. There is only One way to approach this throne of Grace, there is One way to be forgiven and accepted by God-through the blood of Jesus.

Spend time praying asking Holy Spirit for fresh revelation concerning the blood of Jesus.