

- I) V11-13 Therefore remember that you, once Gentiles in the flesh—who were called
- II) As we saw in our last study, Paul declared one of God's purposes in salvation
V10 He said that we are God's workmanship created for good works
- III) We saw that good works do not produce salvation, but salvation produces good works
Good works don't produce disciples, but disciples of Jesus produce good works
- IV) In Ch 1:14 Paul said that God redeemed us to the praise of His glory
The same One who has redeemed us has also empowered us to perform good works
Our lives and the way that we live are intended by God to glorify Him
- V) The same power that raised Jesus from the dead is at work in us
It is this same Holy Spirit power that produced life in our once spiritually dead lives
Ro 8:11 And if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies because of His Spirit who lives in you.
- VI) The proof someone is a Christian is basic: Transformed minds produce transformed lives
Before they came to faith in Jesus, they were hostile towards Him
Ro 8:7-8 The mind governed by the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so. Those who are in the realm of the flesh cannot please God.
- VII) Their rejection of God was once clearly demonstrated by the way that they lived
Col 1:21 Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior.
The hostility is not caused by wicked works, but is revealed by them
- VIII) Now that they are saved, they have been transformed by the renewing of their minds
- IX) As their understanding is now enlightened (V18) they live a life of good works
These works have been prepared beforehand
This is why walking in good works reveals we are saved, revealing

salvation

X) With that, I will share a few things about being God's workmanship (poiema)

XI) **FIRST:** As His workmanship, we have been created, or formed by Him
Salvation is not our own work, or granted to us because we have worked to gain it

XII) Salvation is provided for and obtained for us through His own will and by His power

I) **KEY:** He has done the work, purchased us and we believers belong to Him
1 Co 6:19-20 Don't you realize that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who lives in you and was given to you by God? You do not belong to yourself, for God bought you with a high price. So you must honor God with your body.

II) **SECOND:** We are His workmanship, which is the Greek word poiema
God's power and divinity though physically unseen, are revealed through creation

III) **THIRD:** We are His workmanship created in Christ Jesus for good works
This is specifically referring to when we were born again, becoming new creations
2 Co 5:17 If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.

IV) **FOURTH:** We are His workmanship created in Christ Jesus for good works
Christian faith is made visible through the actions of those who have trusted in Jesus
We perform good work because the love of Christ compels us (2 Co 5:14)

V) **FIFTH:** We have been created for good works which God prepared beforehand
God planned for us to do good works because they reflect His character and actions
1 Jn 2:6 He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked.

VI) Good works are not produced because we know the gospel story. Good works are produced because we know the author of the story
Ezek 36:27 I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do them.

**VII) At this point in his letter, Paul begins to develop the theme of Christian unity
In Jesus, God has taken both Jew and Gentile and has made
them into one new man**

**VIII) V11-13 Therefore remember that you, once Gentiles in the flesh—who were
called
Paul reminds them that at one time they were without God and were
totally lost**

**IX) This is because God had not revealed Himself to them as He had to Israel
In doing so they had received great advantages over the nations of the
world Ps 147:19-20 He declares His word to Jacob, His statutes
and His judgments to Israel. He has not dealt thus with any nation; and as for His
judgments, they have not known them. Praise the LORD!
Ro 3:1-2 What advantage then is there in being a Jew, or what value is
there in circumcision? Much in every way! First of all, they have been entrusted with
the very words of God.**

**I) Paul says that they were once Gentiles in the flesh who are called
Uncircumcision
Why were they called the uncircumcision**

**II) Circumcision was an external evidence of a relationship with God
God ordained it as such an evidence when He called Abram
Gen 17:10 This is my covenant with you and your descendants after
you, the covenant you are to keep: Every male among you shall be circumcised.**

**III) When God established His relationship to Israel, circumcision was its emblem
Ex 19:5-6 Now if you obey Me fully and keep My covenant, then out of all
nations you will be My treasured possession. Although the whole earth is Mine, you
will be for Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.' These are the words you are to
speak to the Israelites."**

**IV) As part of the identification as His people, God established circumcision
It became part of the requirements of the Law of Moses
Lev 12:3 On the eighth day the flesh of his foreskin shall be
circumcised.**

**V) Gentiles did not recognize circumcision as an evidence of relationship with
God
This is why the Jews referred to them as Uncircumcision**

VI) The fact that they were uncircumcised was an evidence of estrangement from God

It provoked the Jews to pride because they were God's people and Gentiles were not

VII) The fact is: True circumcision never was ritual, but was always motivated by faith

This is revealed in both the Old and New Testaments

Dt 30:6 The LORD your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your descendants, to love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, that you may live.

Ro 2:28-29 He is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh; but he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and *circumcision is that of the heart*, in the Spirit, not in the letter; whose praise is not from men but from God.

VIII) V12 That at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of

Paul begins to describe their lives *before they were saved*

IX) FIRST: You were without Christ, which communicates that they were unsaved Without Christ which meant, you had no hope for Messiah

X) You had no hope for a Savior, and no hope for someone to deliver you from bondage

The only expectation you could have was one of judgment

Heb 9:27 Just as man is appointed to die once, and after that to face judgment

I) SECOND: You were aliens from the *commonwealth of Israel* and strangers from the

You were aliens from the commonwealth of Israel: excluded from citizenship

II) God made Israel into a commonwealth (an independent country)

It was a theocracy, a nation ruled by a king, and God is Israel's king

Is 44:6 This is what the LORD says— *Israel's King* and Redeemer, the LORD Almighty: I am the first and I am the last; apart from me there is no God.

Jer 10:10a But the Lord is the true God; he is the living God and the everlasting King

III) The Jews were a theocracy with God's blessings, love, and covenant but Gentiles weren't

Ro 9:4-5 (they) are Israelites, to whom pertain the adoption, the glory,

the covenants, the giving of the law, the service of God, and the promises; of whom are the fathers and from whom, according to the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, the eternally blessed God. Amen.

IV) **THIRD: You were *without hope***

God's promises and love for Israel gave the nation hope for their future
Jer 29:11 For I know the plans I have for you," says the Lord. "They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope".

V) **Genuine hope will always rest on a trustworthy promise**

God's promises are trustworthy, and because they are we can live in hope

Nu 23:19 God is not a man, that He should lie, Nor a son of man, that He should repent; Has He said, and will He not do it? Or has He spoken, and will He not make it good?

VI) **God's promises provoke us to hope, and confidence in Him and His word**

Ps 31:24 Be of good courage, And He shall strengthen your heart, All you who hope in the LORD.

Ps 146:5 Happy is he who has the God of Jacob for his help whose hope is in the Lord his God

VII) **They had no promises to cling to, which resulted in them living without hope**

VIII) **FOURTH: They were *without God* in the world**

The lack of knowledge of the True God resulted in their idolatry
Gal 4:8 When you did not know God, you served those which by nature are not gods

IX) **They had gods, but not the True God**

X) **V13 But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been made near by the**

To be *far off* and to be *near* were sayings in use among the Jews

I) **FIRST: To be far off signifies to be under God's displeasure**

It speaks of separation from the Lord, a separation caused by sin and unrighteousness

Is 59:1-2 Behold, the LORD'S hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; Nor His ear heavy, that it cannot hear. But your iniquities have separated you from your God; and your sins have hidden His face from you, so that He will not hear

II) **SECOND: To be near signifies to be in relationship with the Lord**

Ps 34:18 The LORD is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit.

Ps 73:28 But it is good for me to draw near to God; I have put my trust in the Lord GOD, That I may declare all Your works.

Jas 4:8 Draw near to God and He will draw near to you.

III) V13 We were far off but now the blood of Christ has made us near to God
This means that Jesus took our place as a substitute for us, and brought us to God

IV) Man could not atone for his own sins personally because they are too great
Ps 49:6-9 **They trust in their wealth and boast of great riches. Yet they cannot redeem themselves from death by paying a ransom to God. Redemption does not come so easily, for no one can ever pay enough to live forever and never see the grave.**

V) In the OT animals were sacrificed and visibly revealed of the seriousness of sin

Heb 10:2-4 in those sacrifices *there is a reminder of sins every year*. For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sins.

VI) The blood of bulls and goats could not take away sins but Jesus' does (Eph 1:7)

Col 1:14 In (Jesus) we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins.

1 Pe 1:18-19 knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.

VII) V14 For He *Himself is our peace* who has made both one and has broken down the

What sacrifices, laws, rituals and ceremonies could not do, Jesus did in His sacrifice

He Himself and He alone brings us into peace with God, and peace with others

VIII) He *is our peace* is different than saying that *He made peace* (V15)

It is in Him that warring people can actually live in peace

He is our peace because He brought people hostile to one another together

- IX) V14 has broken down the middle wall of separation
The middle wall is the court of the Gentiles that separated them from rest of the temple
- I) The temple was divided into four courts
The court of the Gentiles, court of the women, court of Israel and court of the priests
SIGN: No Gentile may enter within the barricade which surrounds the sanctuary and enclosure. Anyone who is caught doing so will have himself to blame for his ensuing death
- II) Jesus broke down this barrier and united Jew and Gentile, in Himself
- III) V15 having abolished in His flesh the enmity that is the law of commandments
The law of commandments was related to feasts, offerings, purification, cleanness
- IV) These were ritual laws that ensured the separation of Israel from the Gentiles
They were not the moral laws: 9 of the 10 commandments are found in the NT
- V) By abolishing these ordinances that separated Jew from Gentile, He made a new man
A Christian, who have been saved out of the world and follows Jesus
- VI) He is a new man because he is neither Jew nor Gentile, but a believer
Gal 3:28 There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.
- VII) Jesus brings Jew and Gentile together *in Him* and has united them in Himself
Ro 10:11-13 For the Scripture says, "Whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame." For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, for the same Lord over all is rich to all who call upon Him. For "whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved."
1 Pe 2:10 Once *you were not a people, but now you are the people of God*; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.
- VIII) V16 And that He might *reconcile* them both to God in one body through the cross
It is by *faith in Jesus* and *true conversion* that man can be at peace with one another
- IX) The way Jews and Gentiles are reconciled to one another is by first reconciling with God

Hostility between them ceases through the atonement of Jesus, on the Cross

Col 1:20 and through Him to reconcile to Himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through His blood, shed on the cross.

X) RECONCILE: To remove all hostility and leave no barrier to unity and peace
This is God's intention for the human race, both Jew and Gentile alike
Jn 17:20-21 My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in Me through their message, that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in Me and I am in You. May they also be in Us so that the world may believe that You have sent Me.

This reconciliation to God is intended to also produce reconciliation between all people

I) The Ephesians needed to be reminded cultivate unity in Jesus
Unity in Christ must be protected, because division undermines the gospel's power

Eph 4:3 Endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace

II) V17 And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those who were

Jesus preached peace with God through Him, and peace with others

III) He came to bring peace to man, and to encourage peace with one another

At His birth, the angel said (Lu 2:14) Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men

IV) Jn 14:27 Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you

Jn 16:33 These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace

V) The God of peace has come that in Him, we would have peace with Him, and others

VI) V18 For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father

By Jesus, Jew and Gentile believers can have personal intimate access to the Father

Heb 4:16 Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.

VII) Being at peace with God, and at peace with one another gives us a practical blessing

V17 We too can preach peace to those who are far off, and those who are near

