

The Church A Dwelling of God in the Spirit

Ephesians 2:19-22

*So, then you are no longer strangers and aliens,
but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God's household,
having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets,
Christ Jesus Himself being the corner stone,
in whom the whole building, being fitted together, is growing into a holy temple in the Lord,
in whom you also are being built together into a dwelling of God in the Spirit.*

You are > the Gentiles in Ephesus

- No longer strangers and aliens (foreigners – not belonging to)
- Fellow citizens with the saints > translated holy 161 times (consecrated / righteous)

Of God's household > **the church** (kinship)

- A building
- A foundation: Christ (Cornerstone); Apostles; and Prophets
- A construction / building process
- The structure – a temple
- **A dwelling place of God in the Spirit**

A NEW COVENANT

The Need for a New Covenant:

The Old Testament > the history of God's people

- God was with the patriarchs: Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob
- God was with **Moses** who **recognized what distinguished them** from all other peoples.

Exodus 33:16 "By Your going with us, Your people will be distinguished from all the other people who are upon the face of the earth?"

(In time) The people of God rebelled against Him and "grieved His Holy Spirit."
A realization of their departure from the presence of God became their new reality

Isaiah 63:17-19

(19) We have become like those over whom You have never ruled, like those who were not called by Your name.

A Future Hope

Jeremiah 31:31-34

"The days are coming when I will make **a new covenant** with the people of Israel and with the people of Judah.

Ezekiel 36:26-27

And **I will put my Spirit in you** and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws.

A NEW COVENANT:

The Last days

The death and resurrection of Jesus Christ and the sending of the promised Holy Spirit inaugurated the beginning of the “Last Days”

Recognized as so by the Apostles

- Peter: Acts 2:17 “In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people.”
- Paul: 1 Corinthians 10:11 (the church) “upon whom the ends of the ages have come.”

Paul seen himself, the other Apostles, and all whom the Lord called and sent preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ “as **servants of a new covenant**, not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.” **(2 Corinthians 3:6)**

God had restored His presence among His people, The Church.
The Church was a mystery in the Old Testament –

Ephesians 3:3-5

“(the mystery of Christ) ⁽⁵⁾ which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit.”

The mystery was the inclusion of both Jews and Gentiles under the New Eternal Covenant.

A NEW LIFE

On that day of Pentecost (now seen as the birth of the New Testament Church) God, through His Holy Spirit, revealed His Son, Jesus Christ.

The Holy Spirit brought to the hearts of His people, conviction of their sin, for they had not believed in Jesus Christ.

They asked Peter and the Apostles, “What shall we do?” Peter, filled with the Spirit of God replied...

Acts 2:38-41 "Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. ⁽³⁹⁾ "For the promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off, as many as the Lord our God will call to Himself."

- Repent > change of attitude / behavior; stop what is wrong, start what is right; turn from sin to God.
- Baptized

Matthew 3:11 "As for me, I baptize you with water for repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, and I am not fit to remove His sandals; He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.

John was sent by God. His ministry was one of preparation – a forerunner of the Christ. As John made clear

“...the One coming after him, was mightier, (greater in power and strength). He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit!”

Entrance into God’s eternal Kingdom requires a new birth.

John 3:5 Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

The result of this new birth is a new creation.

A NEW PEOPLE

Titus 3:3-5 ⁽³⁾ For we also once were foolish ourselves, disobedient, deceived, enslaved to various lusts and pleasures, spending our life in malice and envy, hateful, hating one another. ⁽⁴⁾ But when the kindness of God our Savior and *His* love for mankind appeared, ⁽⁵⁾ He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, **by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit.**

Regeneration > a new birth into a new family

We do not live according to this age (the course of this world).

We live by the ethics of the eternal kingdom of God.

We are a holy nation – the blood bought church of Jesus Christ.

Our distinguishing character: God's presence in us.

1 Peter 2:4-5

⁽⁴⁾ And coming to Him as to a living stone which has been rejected by men, but is choice and precious in the sight of God, ⁽⁵⁾ you also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

Ephesians 2:21-22

⁽²¹⁾ in whom the whole building, being fitted together, is growing into a holy temple in the Lord, ⁽²²⁾ in whom you also are being built together into a dwelling of God in the Spirit.