

In Christ

Ephesians 2:11-22

"It could be said that those in power today only seek to create great things with men. I would like them to think a bit more about creating great men, to attach less value to the work and more to the worker and to remember that a nation cannot remain strong when each man is individually weak." (Democracy in America – written in 1820s)

¹¹ Therefore remember that at one time you Gentiles in the flesh, called "the uncircumcision" by what is called the circumcision, which is made in the flesh by hands— ¹² remember that you were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. ¹³ **But now in Christ Jesus** you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. Ephesians 2:11–22 (ESV)

But now in Christ Jesus – but what does that actually mean? Why "in Christ?"

1. A sense of dependence

a. Accepted

"...even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love..." Ephesians 1:4 (ESV)

b. Adopted

"...he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will..." Ephesians 1:5 (ESV)

c. Appointed

"In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will..." Ephesians 1:11 (ESV)

2. A sense of gratitude

"A sense of gratitude usually accompanies a sense of dependence." (P. 56)

"Ingratitude is a chief obstacle to experiencing life as vacation. Ingratitude is the blind refusal to acknowledge with thanks the gifted character of life and of God. Instead of thanking God, ingratitude blames God; it views accomplishments and prosperity as rightful earnings rather than as unmerited gifts. It views one's own failures and adversity as unmerited affliction, and the failures of others as rightly deserved." (p. 57)

3. A sense of obligation

¹⁴ For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility ¹⁵ by abolishing the law of commandments expressed in ordinances, that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace, ¹⁶ and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby killing the hostility. ¹⁷ And he came and preached peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near. ¹⁸ For through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father. ¹⁹ So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, ²⁰ built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, ²¹ in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. ²² In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit. Ephesians 2:14-22 (ESV)

God has worked it, but we must live it.

An obligation to be part of the whole.

4. A sense of meaning

Without God your golden age is in the past.

With God your golden age is yet in the future.