

Our Roots & Peace

Ephesians 2:11-3

Pray

Here in this passage Paul is going to look back to our roots

- And describe how we became part of Gods Family!

And show us how we were once far off from God

- But we have been brought near to God

Paul is going to share with us about our Spiritual Roots!

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

Here Paul tells the believers in Ephesus to **Remember** were they came from

- Remember who you were before Jesus = you were gentiles & lived like them!
 - What is a Gentile? Anyone who is not a Jew = they lived worldly lives
 - The Jews looked down on gentiles & called them names
 - And treated them like dogs, outsiders & bullied them
- Paul's audience were largely Gentiles in Ephesus.

The Jewish Pharisee men were not nice to gentiles & would pray in the morning

- Thanking God they were not born a women, dog or gentile!
 - And they believed the purpose of gentiles was to keep hell burning...

The Jews & gentiles did not get along & there was division & tension between them

Paul says here **remember** how your life was before Jesus

- It is important for us to look back & **remember** our past
 - Remember how the Lord saved you & how He got ahold of your life
 - B/c it makes you appreciate all God has done & humbles you

Paul says here in vs. 12 I want you to remember 5 things **Show Slide**

- About who you were before Jesus came, saved us & adopted us into his fam

#1. You were without Christ

- Whenever someone is without Christ their in a very scary & dangerous place!
 - If your without Christ **Your on the highway to hell like AC/DC tells us!**

Acts 4:12 tells **there is salvation in no 1 except Christ, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.**

- Only Jesus Christ can save us & get us to heaven!

To be without Christ means you are not living the life God has called you to live!

1 John 5:12 He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life. If you live & die without Christ = its the saddest thing that could ever happen

The Bible says **what will it prophesied a man if he gains the whole world and yet loses his own soul or what will a man give in exchange for his soul**

- If you are without Christ this morning = give your life to Him!

Not only were we without Christ before Jesus but he says

#2. We were aliens from the commonwealth of Israel

- He is not talking about we were green marshins from area 51
 - He is saying you were not a citizen of God's country heaven

#3. We were strangers from the covenants of promise

- **The non believer has no access to the promises of God**
 - Except the promise of coming Judgment & separation from God

Only the Believer in Jesus can claim the promises of God like

Romans 8:28 **we know that All things work together for good to those who love God**

When you give your life to Jesus the Bible says **you have been given exceedingly great & precious promises!** Before no access but now they are ours!

I have found The promises of God will bring us through life's really hard times!

- And **all the promises of God the Bible says in Him are yes & amen!** There ours

Not only were we without Christ before Jesus, aliens & strangers to the promises of God

- But he also says in vs. 12

#.4 We had no hope for the future

- The lost have wishful thinking = but Christians have a living hope!
 - So many people in the world today are hopeless!

But Christians have an absolute expectation & assurance when you die you go to heaven

- When you take your last breathe here you will take your first in heaven

The Bible says in **2 Corinthians 5:8** that **We are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be absent from the body, means to be present with the Lord in heaven!**

- Jesus told the thief on the cross **today you will be with me in paradise**

One of the greatest things about the Bible is that it gives us Hope!

- It tells us our past, our purpose & where we are headed!

Not only were we without Christ before Jesus, aliens, strangers, had no hope

- But he also says in vs. 12

#5. We were without God in the world not anchored to His Word to guide & direct us

- And my heart breaks for the lost trying to figure it all out without God
 - They are like sheep without a good shepherd

So many people are miserable & confused drifting through life without God

- Doing it on their own, No relationship with God & no church

Paul shares the bad news who we were before Jesus saved us & adopted us into his fam

- And now he will share the good news in vs. 13

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

Paul says you were once **far off** away from God, way out in left field lost!

- But since you believed in Jesus & decided to follow & trust Him
 - You were **brought near** to God by Jesus dying on the cross
- I love that phrase **brought near** = reminds me when your having a hard time
 - And a loved one brings you near & holds you!

Jesus dying on the cross & shedding his blood for us was the greatest act of love

If you ever doubt Gods Love for you look to the cross = remind you of His love 4 u

- It wasn't the nails that held Jesus to the cross but His love for you & me

The Bible says in **Romans 5:8** "God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us."

- Jesus shed His blood to save us! He went through a lot of pain & agony to save us!
 - In the Garden he sweated great blood drops
 - He was beaten, punched & beard plucked out
 - Wipped 39 times: with the Cat of 9 tails
 - They Beat a crown of thorns on His head
 - Nailed him to a cross
 - Pieced his side

Jesus was born to bleed & die to save us from our sins!

- He took the punishment of our sin upon himself
 - So we wouldn't have to be punished for our sin

The Bible says, **John 15:13**

Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends.

- **Story of Soldier jumping on grenade**

- Satan threw a grenade of sin into the world to destroy us
 - Jesus jumped on it & took the blow to save us!

¹⁴ For **He Himself is our peace**, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, 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, ¹⁶ and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity. ¹⁷ And **He came and preached peace to you who were afar off** and to those who were near. ¹⁸ For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father.

Here Paul says Jesus is our peace. And in the Greek, it's very emphatic. He alone,

- He emphatically, He himself is our peace. **He is the prince of peace!**
 - **He is the Only one who can give us true peace of mind & peace w/ God**
- **A peace that surpasses all understanding in the midst of any storm we may face!**

Jesus said I will be your peace to the Jew = believe in me = I'm the messiah

- He also has said = Gentile believe in me
 - And He has made Both Jew & Gentile. Two people who were separated,
- He's made them one = in the church = as believers at peace w/ one another

Sort of like if you take two metals like copper & tin

- **When you put them together, you don't have two metals anymore.**

You have one new metal called bronze which is stronger than either metal on its own

And so God takes two different kinds of people, and reconciles Jew & Gentile bringing peace.

In Judaism, there was separation. if you went to the temple in Jerusalem, There were courts.

- There was the outer court of the temple for the Gentiles.

they had the nosebleed section. They were way off in left field. They couldn't get very near.

- If you move a little further in, then you have the Court of the Women.

There was then a closer court called the Court of the Men,

- And then finally, the temple itself, only the priests could go,
 - and then the high priest once a year into the Holy of Holies.
 - So there were divisions & separation.

There was a wall that separated them & God took down that wall like Jericho!

- And Now the Gentiles can have an intimate relationship with the God of Israel

So in Christ, there's no division You're just a believer a follower of Christ.

We need to be careful about segregating people at church,

- some churches say this is our target audience, we only young people or old people!

And so when people say, who's your target audience?

- I say, **Everyone's my target audience. I don't care your age.**
 - I don't care your skin color. I don't care if you have dyed hair or bald.
 - I don't care if you have tattoos or you have piercings or you don't
 - You are welcome.

Back then people had to go through a high priest to get right w/ God

- And there was a veil in the temple & the priest would go in once a year
 - To deal with the people's sin
 - But when Jesus died the veil was torn from top to bottom
 - And now we can come to God whenever we want
 - We have access to Him

I love here how we can see the Trinity in vs. 18

¹⁹ Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, ²⁰ having been built on the foundation of

the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone,²¹ in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord,²² in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.

Paul encourages the gentiles who have believed in Jesus

- By telling them they are apart of the household of God now!
 - Your in Gods family = no longer foreigners, strangers or outsiders
 - You have been brought into & adopted into the family of God

All of us who have put our faith in Jesus are all apart of Gods family now

- We are brothers & sisters in Christ b/c of Jesus!
 - I am closer to a lot of my believing friends than my own family
 - We need to love each other & care for each other like a family

Paul says here our foundation & chief is Jesus

- We are building on Gods Word & Jesus b/c He is the only solid foundation!
 - Our whole life, church, and families will fall apart & crumble
 - If its not built on Jesus & His Word

On Christ the Solid Rock I stand, All other ground is sinking sand

Ephesians 3:1 For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for you Gentiles—

Paul wrote this letter to the Ephesian church while he was in prison locked up in Rome

But Paul doesn't complain about his situation

- He just says he is a **prisoner of Christ Jesus**
 - Even though it was Rome who put him in prison

Paul understood he was locked up in prison b/c God put him there

- Paul understood God's will & purpose for his life
 - And he knew he wouldn't be in that situation unless God aloud it
 - Could it really have been Gods will 4 Paul to be locked up?

I am actually glad Paul got locked up in prison

- B/c it was in prison Paul wrote most of the letters we have in our Bibles
 - If Paul wasn't locked up I don't think he would of wrote all these letters
 - B/c he charged so hard 4 Jesus planting churches all over
 - It's like God locked him up to make him sit still & write

As Paul was locked up he even started a prison ministry

- And many of the guards who were chained to him got saved as he witnessed!

Paul said in Phil 1:12-13 I want you to know, brethren, that the things which happened to me have actually turned out for the furtherance of the gospel, so that it has become evident to the whole palace guard, and to all the rest, that my chains are in Christ

- All of Ceasors palace guards got saved b/c of Paul being locked up in Rome!

Paul knew God was using this prison experience in his life for the furtherance of the gospel

- He took advantage of the situation God put him in
 - And used it for God's glory = to advance the gospel

I don't know what situation your in today but maybe you feel locked up like Paul

- You feel like your in a prison like situation stuck & you cant wait to get out

I want to encourage you to take advantage of the situation God has you in

- And look at it like Paul did to use every opportunity to glorify God
 - And to share Jesus w/ those who God has in your life right now

Why was Paul locked up? How did he get locked up?

- Paul says in vs. 1, I am in prison **for you Gentiles**
 - It was b/c Paul preached the gospel to the gentiles & stood up 4 them

Jesus told him to go & share

- The good news w/ all the world including the Gentiles & they got saved
 - And the Religious Jews hated how Paul preached & hung out
 - W/ the gentiles & they were constantly following him
 - Trying to stop him from reaching out to gentiles

The Jews got mad at Paul & attacked Paul **Like Paranas or birds going crazy over food**

- & the Roman Soldiers grabbed him & brought him to jail
 - The Jews told them Paul was breaking their laws
 - Remember Paul stood & shared his testimony on the way to jail
 - And told the Jews how Jesus told him to go & share gospel to gentiles
 - **They cried out he is not fit to live, tore their clothes, threw dust in the air**
- Paul was then taken to Rome to be put on trial for standing up 4 the gentiles
 - So that is how Paul got in the prison in Rome

And lets see what Paul has to write from his prison cell in vs. 2-9

² if indeed you have heard of **the dispensation of the grace of God** which was given to me for you, ³ how that by revelation He made known to me the mystery (as I have briefly written already, ⁴ by which, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ), ⁵ which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets: ⁶ that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Christ through the gospel, ⁷ of which I became a minister according to the gift of the grace of God given to me by the effective working of His power.

Here Paul explains how God made known to him the mystery of the good news

- Being for both Jews & gentiles to come together as they receive Jesus!
 - Their not to be separated = they are to be one body united in Jesus!

Paul says he was entrusted with the message of the Grace of God

- God has also entrusted us with the message of the Grace of God also!

What caused you to give your life to Jesus?

- Someone shared the message of the love & grace of God with you!
 - They shared the bad news & then the good news of Gods love & grace

Grace is getting what you don't deserve = Grace is Gods love, forgiveness & favor

- We don't deserve to have a relationship w/ God, to be saved or go to heaven

the Bible says in Eph 2:8 for by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God = its not of works!

Paul saw his life & ministry as a gift of grace, from God!

- He knew he didn't deserve to be used by God = he used to persecute God
 - But God got ahold of his life & used him in a mighty way b/c of grace

⁸To me, who am less than the least of all the saints, this grace was given, that I should preach among the Gentiles **the unsearchable riches of Christ**,⁹ and to make all see what is the ¹⁰fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God who created all things ¹¹through Jesus Christ;

Here we see Paul humble as he realizes God's grace that was shown toward him

- As he says, **I am the least of all the saints** & Gods grace was given to me!

1 Corinth 15:10 Paul said, **by the grace of God I am what I am**

- Paul knew he was nothing without Jesus & God's Grace!
 - He knew he was unworthy & it was Gods grace that saved him!
 - **And without Gods grace we would all be lost!**

Paul knew it was by God's grace that he got to preach **the unsearchable riches of Christ**

- This is an amazing statement b/c you cannot fully discover all the riches of God

A lot of people think they have figured out the Bible and know it pretty well

- But you cant fully know all the riches in the Bible about Jesus
 - it would take more than a lifetime to search them all out

Gods Word is an immeasurable sea you'll never know it completely

- Paul was blown away by the enormous ocean of god's grace & truth

Every time I go through the Bible I am learning something new & find new verses!

- We get to discover & proclaim the unsearchable riches of Jesus in His Word!

It's like finding treasure in a mining shaft that never ends that is full of treasure!

- And the farther you go into it the more you find & the more your blessed!

David said in Psalms **Your words are my treasure; they are my heart's delight.**

- **I rejoice in your word like one who discovers a great treasure.**
- **Your Words are better to me than thousands of coins of Gold & silver**
 - Paul felt so blessed to be able to share the unsearchable riches of Jesus
 - Those golden nuggets w/ others & **we should feel blessed to do the same**

¹⁰ to the intent that now the [d] manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church to the [e] principalities and powers in the heavenly places, ¹¹ according to the eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord,

Paul says here the wisdom of God is being revealed to the principalities & powers

- In heavenly places by the church
 - Principalities & powers in heavenly places are **angels**
 - And there watching us & are in amazement over us
 - How God saved us & brought us together as a church

Did you know Angels are watching us?

Psalms 34:7 says **the Angel of the Lord encamps all around those who fear Him & delivers them**

The Bible says in **Hebrews 1:14** that **the angels of God are around Christians & are ministering spirits that serve us!**

- **We cant see them but there are Angels around us**
 - **And 1 day we will see Angels in heaven!**
- **Angels make me think of Angels in the outfield**
- **Al; helped them jump & slide; **Even though you cant see us we are always watching****

Angels are very powerful creatures & they are sent by God to minister & protect us

¹² in whom we have boldness and access with confidence through faith in Him.

We have access to talk w/ God b/c of what Jesus did for us on the cross

Hebrews 4:16 **let us come boldly to the throne of Grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.**

- **God is never too busy for us = open door policy = Doors are always open**
 - **You can talk to God whenever you want!**

It's not like when you pray & call heaven

- **You get an automatic operating answer machine**
 - If you speak English **press 1**, Spanish **2**, Chinese **3**
 - If you are calling for financial support **press 4**
 - If someone is driving you crazy **press 5**
 - **And God will send a lightning bolt**

Praying to God is not like that = The door is open & we have access to God

- Through prayer b/c of what Jesus did for us

God is always ready to listen to our prayers

- He loves hearing us run to His throne in heaven!

¹³ Therefore I ask that you do not lose heart at my tribulations for you, which is your glory.

The church in Ephesus loved Paul & they constantly saw him get beat up by the enemy

- They saw & heard of him getting stoned in the streets & thrown in prison
 - And I am sure they felt bad for all Paul went threw

But Paul tells them to **not loose heart!**

- He told them its all good = Don't worry about it = its all worth it!
 - Keep charging 4 Jesus = don't let tribulations stop you!

Jesus said in **John 16:33** In the world you shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.

Maybe your loosing heart this morning or feel like giving up!

- Jesus would say DO NOT LOOSE HEART! KEEP CHARGING 4 ME!

¹⁴ For this reason I bow my knees to the Father [of our Lord Jesus Christ, ¹⁵ from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, ¹⁶ that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man,

Here we see Paul prays to God

- For the church to be strengthened by the Holy Spirit

Jesus said in Acts 1:8 you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you

- How do you get the power of the Holy Spirit? Just ask God

Don't try to do life in your own might & power & flesh

- When God wants to give you His power & Strength

The Bible tells us it's the same power that rose Jesus from the dead!

God tells us in the Bible to Not do things by your might nor by your power, but by My Spirit,' Says the Lord **Zech 4:6**

There is power available for us to live the Christian life & to not give into sin!

- You cant live the Christian life w/out the power of the Holy Spirit!
 - I ask God for strength & power every day by His Spirit

The Bible says we can do all things through Christ who strengthens us!

Isa 40:29 tells us God gives power to the weak, And to those who have no might He

increases strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, And the young men shall utterly fall, But those who wait on the Lord Shall renew *their* strength;
They shall mount up with wings like eagles, They shall run and not be weary,
They shall walk and not faint.

Do you need strength? Do you feel weak?

- Ask God for His strength & He will give you the strength & power you need

¹⁷ that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, ¹⁸ may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height—¹⁹ to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.²⁰ Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, ²¹ to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

I love how Paul prays that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith

- The word **dwell**: means to be at home, to be comfortable

I remember when I was young I broke my collarbone & got an X-Ray

- On the way home I looked at it in the car & got mad at my mom
 - B/c she said when I excepted Christ he lived in my heart & I didn't see him

When you accept Jesus to be the Savior & Lord of your life

- He comes in you by His Spirit & lives inside of you = Eph 1:13

Paul said in Galatians 2:20, It is not I who live but Christ who lives in me

Jesus said in Rev 3 Behold I stand at the door and knock, if anyone hears my voice & opens the door I will come in to him & dine with him

The Bible says we are the temple of the living God

Is God at home in your heart? Is he comfortable living with you?

- Have you blocked off certain areas of your life from him to not have access?
 - God you cant go on my computer, email, text or look under my bed!
 - Is Jesus dwelling with you comfortably or uncomfortably?
 - In what you view, listen to & how you live?

There's a great little booklet Every Christian should read

- It's an old one called My Heart, Christ's Home. You can get it online.
 - the author is Robert Munger. It's all about this concept,
- how Jesus comes into a person's life. It's like inviting him into your house.

I love how Paul says here to be **rooted & grounded in Gods Love!**

- Gods word the Bible = is Gods love letter to us!

- To be rooted in Gods word is a planting term of a plant sinking its roots deep
 - TO find water & nutrients to grow strong & be stable
- When the storm & wind comes it remains firm b/c its rooted deep

Have you ever tried to pull a plant out of the ground that's rooted deep? It's Hard!

Paul is saying I want you to be rooted in Gods Word like that tree!

- Nothing is going to yank you away or pull you up b/c your rooted in Gods love

If you only get watered at church once a week that is not enough b/c you will dry up

- You need to water yourself daily by getting into Gods word to be strong & healthy!

I love how Paul says here I want you to know the width and length and depth and height of the love of Christ! This verse reminds me of the Grand Canyon

If you don't remember anything else I said today

- Remember God loves you so much & proved His love by giving his life 4 u!

Pray