

Remember, Reconcile, and Rest: EPHESIANS 2:11-22

Last week: Ephesians 2:1-10

- What you were:
 - Dead: following the world, the devil and the flesh
- What God has done:
 - Made us alive, raised us up and seated us in the heavenlies in Christ
- How we are to live:
 - Walking in the good works He prepared for us

This week: Ephesians 2:11-22

- Who you were (2:11-12)
 - REMEMBER
- What Christ has done (2:13-18)
 - RECONCILED
- Who you are now (2:19-22)
 - ONE HOUSEHOLD

WHO YOU WERE (2:11-12)

REMEMBER: The first command of the epistle to the Ephesians

- Guard against spiritual amnesia
- Remember where you were and what He has done
 - Deuteronomy 8
 - Psalm 103

You were...

- Separated from Christ
- Alienated from citizenship of God's people
- Strangers to the covenants of promise
- Having no hope
- Without God in the world

Covenants of Promise

- Covenant: A binding agreement between two parties with specific obligations
 - a sovereign and a subordinate
- Aspects of a covenant: Benevolence/Promises, loyalty, blessings and curses
- The Covenant of God
 - Adam (Genesis 1:28-30; 2:16-17)
 - Noah (Genesis 8:20-9:17)
 - Abraham (Genesis 12; 15; 17:1-14)
 - Moses (Exodus 19-24)
 - David (2 Samuel 7)
- The New Covenant
 - Jeremiah 31:31-34; Ezekiel 36:25-27; 37:26-27
 - "This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood." Luke 22:20
 - "For all the promises of God find their Yes in him." 2 Corinthians 1:20

BUT NOW...WHAT CHRIST HAS DONE (2:13-18)

- You have been brought near by the blood of Christ (v.13)
 - Not by circumcision:
 - “For no one is a Jew who is merely one outwardly, nor is circumcision outward and physical. But a Jew is one inwardly, and circumcision is a matter of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter.” Romans 2:28-29
 - “Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus, by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh...” Hebrews 10:19-20
- Christ is our peace (v.14)
 - PEACE: both a cessation of war and the well-being and harmonious living of all God’s restored creation, which is brought about by the saving activity of the Messiah
 - Made Jew and Gentile one (v.14)
 - “There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise.” Galatians 3:28-29
 - Broken the wall of hostility in His flesh (v.14)
 - The inscription on a wall in the temple dividing the inner and outer courts
 - NO MAN OF ANOTHER NATION TO ENTER WITHIN THE FENCE AND ENCLOSURE ROUND THE TEMPLE, AND WHOEVER IS CAUGHT WILL HAVE HIMSELF TO BLAME THAT HIS DEATH ENSUES
 - Abolished the law (v.15)
 - “Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. For truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished. Therefore whoever relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven.” Matthew 5:17-19
 - Created in Himself one new humanity (v.15)
 - “I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me.” John 17:20-23
 - Reconciled us to God (v.16)
 - “Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” Romans 5:1

THE WORK OF THE TRINITY: Through Him we have access in one Spirit to the Father.

ONE NEW HUMANITY

To be a Christian is to be a new creation, with one new identity, in one new family
“For neither circumcision counts for anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation.”
Galatians 6:15

- “made us both one” (v.14)
- “that he might create in Himself one new man in place of the two” (v.15)
- “reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross” (v.16)
- “through Him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father” (v.18)

He brings Jew and Gentile

“I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep. And I have other sheep that are not of this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd.” John 10:14-16

HOW HAS THIS BEEN ACCOMPLISHED?

By the blood of Christ (v.13)

In His flesh (v.14)

Through the cross (v.16)

All stand alive on the same common ground: at the foot of the cross

SO THEN....you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and...

MEMBERS OF THE HOUSEHOLD OF GOD (v. 19-22)

- Built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets
 - They proclaimed the Word of God
 - Foundation is only laid once: no further apostles and prophets
 - The spoken Word has been replaced by the written Word: the foundation
- Christ Jesus the cornerstone
 - “The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone.” Psalm 118:22
- Grows together into a temple
 - “you yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house...” 1 Peter 2:5
- Built to be a dwelling place of the Holy Spirit
 - The Holy of Holies: the innermost region of the temple

THE WORK OF THE TRINITY: In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.

What we were	What we are now
Dead Following the course of this world Following the prince of the power of the air Carrying out the desires of body and mind By nature children of wrath Uncircumcised Separated from Christ Alienated from God's people Strangers to the covenants of promise Without hope Without God	Alive Loved by God Raised up with Christ Seated in heavenly places Recipients of divine kindness Saved by grace God's workmanship Brought near Reconciled United with fellow believers Enjoying access to God Fellow citizen with the saints Built into the temple of God

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Why are we so quick to forget what the Lord has done for us? How can we be more prone to REMEMBER?

2. How does God's peace contrast with the way people refer to "peace" in today's culture?

3. What aspects of identity tend to create a barrier to divide yourself from other Christians? (nationality, ethnicity, education, social class, etc)

4. How have you seen the gospel break down walls of hostility?

5. What aspect of being a part of the household of God is most comforting? Challenging? Where are you resisting the structure?

HOMEWORK

REMEMBER

Take some time this week to reflect upon what the Lord has done in your life.

What power of the flesh, the devil, and the world has He delivered you from?

What reconciliation has He provided towards Him and towards others?

What spiritual blessings (Ephesians 1:3-14) has He brought better understanding to? How has this changed how you live?

How have you seen the Body of Christ functioning as One in your life? How have you been a part of that? How have you been impacted by people of different backgrounds working together?

How has the Lord been building your life upon the foundation of His Word?

How is Christ your Cornerstone, directing the form, structure, and stability of your life?