

EPHESIANS

The Power to Unite Jew and Gentile

Lesson #4, Ephesians 2:11-22 (Discussion Group Leaders)

After praying that believers would know “the surpassing greatness of God’s power towards them” (Eph. 1:19), the Apostle Paul gives a series of illustrations. For our text for this evening, the Apostle Paul explains that we have given to us the same power that united both Jew and Gentile, longtime rivals, together in the church.

- I. Paul reminds us in Eph. 2:11-12 that the Gentiles, who did not have circumcision or the Law, were separate from Christ, not part of the chosen nation, ignorant of the covenants and promises of God, without hope of salvation, and without God in the world, while the Jews had all these things.
 - A. Consider what the Jews did with their privileges and blessings and what they should have done with them. What can we learn from their mistakes?
 - B. What are some of the privileges you have been given from God that can often go unnoticed or acknowledged?
 - C. What are some of the kinds of things that tempt us to unnecessarily separate ourselves from others who are different from us?
- II. In Eph. 2:13 we are told that the Gentiles were brought near to God and the Jewish believers by the blood of Christ. How is it that the gospel message brings people together who normally would not be friends? Think of examples in your own life.
- III. In Eph. 2:14-16 we learn that the Law of Moses became a “barrier,” a “dividing wall,” between Jew and Gentile. We are also told that Christ “broke down the barrier of the dividing wall,” “abolished in His flesh the enmity” “established peace” between Jew and Gentile and between Gentiles and God, “reconciled them” to each other and to God, and “put to death the enmity” or hostility that existed between Jew and Gentile for so many years. In what ways does the gospel break down barriers and bring people, who are formerly alienated, together?
- IV. In vss. 17-18 the Apostle Paul quotes Isa. 57:19 in relation to the preaching of the gospel, which brings sinners who are far off close to the Lord. He explains that both Jew and Gentile can have access to Christ through the Holy Spirit. How should these truths be manifest in our lives?
- V. In vss. 19-22 the Apostle Paul speaks of those reconciled as “saints” or holy ones, being “built” on the foundation of the apostles, “fitted together,” “growing into a holy temple,” and into a “dwelling of God in the Spirit.” What does this teach us about the life of everyone who is truly saved by grace? What does this teach us about how every believer should live?

Prayer Topics

- Take some time so thank and praise God for those people you might not ever have known if it were not for the gospel.
- Ask the Lord to help you to not let petty differences isolate you from others.
- Pray that Anchor Bible Church would be a church that remains united around the truth of the gospel.