

“EPHESIANS: WHO WE ARE AND HOW WE LIVE – IN CHRIST”

Part Five: Ephesians 2:11-22 July 12, 2020

Pastor Lloyd Brock Pekin First Nazarene

**Ephesians 2:11-22 (NIV) “Jew and Gentile Reconciled through Christ”**

<sup>11</sup> Therefore, **remember** that formerly you who are Gentiles by birth and called “uncircumcised” by those who call themselves “the circumcision” (which is done in the body by human hands)— <sup>12</sup> **remember** that at that time you were separate from Christ, **excluded** from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world. <sup>13</sup> **BUT NOW IN CHRIST JESUS** you who once were far away have been brought near by the blood of Christ.

<sup>14</sup> For **he himself is our peace**, who has **made the two groups one** and has **destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility**, <sup>15</sup> by **setting aside** in his flesh the law with its commands and regulations. **His purpose** was to **create in himself one new humanity out of the two, thus making peace**, <sup>16</sup> and in one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which **he put to death their hostility**. <sup>17</sup> He came and preached peace to you who were far away and peace to those who were near. <sup>18</sup> For through him **we both have access** to the Father by one Spirit.

<sup>19</sup> Consequently, you are **no longer** foreigners and strangers, but **fellow citizens** with God’s people and also **members of his household**, <sup>20</sup> built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with **Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone**. <sup>21</sup> In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. <sup>22</sup> And in him you too are being built together to **become a dwelling** in which God lives by his Spirit.

**WHAT WE LEARN AND APPLY FROM THIS PASSAGE FROM GOD’S WORD**

1. Our world is full of divisions, rivalries, and exclusions. (v.11 – 14)

Notice the reference to “two groups”, the Jews and the Gentiles (non-Jews).

Religious, Racial, Education, Age, Gender, Economic, Employment, Sexuality, Weight, Possessions, Dress, Sports, Computers, Sodas, and many more. . .

2. Everyone knows what it is like to be alienated, excluded, not accepted and discriminated against. (v. 11 -12) Twice we are called to “remember”.

What memories do you have of exclusion or discrimination in your life? How have you worked through that and what impact does it continue to have on you?

3. As believers, we experience the “BUT NOW IN CHRIST JESUS”. (v. 13)

The divisions are real; a part of life for all of us. Yet, because of Christ sacrifice on the cross, we deal with these division or walls completely differently. We are empowered, even transformed, through Christ to find unity, oneness and peace.

4. In this Scripture, what does the Bible say Christ has done for us all?

- Those far away have been brought near / Included by the blood of Christ (v.13).
- Jesus is the source of Peace, that is Peace comes in the person of Jesus (v. 14).
- He destroyed the dividing wall of hostility (v. 14).
- He set aside man-made agendas (v. 15).
- Jesus created in Himself ONE NEW HUMANITY (v. 15)
- Made the two.....into One! (v. 15)
- Brought Vertical (with God) and horizontal (with people) reconciliation (v. 16)
- He preached peace to both sides of the division (v. 17)
- Through Jesus with all have ACCESS to the Father by one Spirit.
- Made us fellow citizens, members of His household and part of His Kingdom

The answer, the turning point, the solution, the role that we as believers serve in the divisions and breakdowns of our day is **IN CHRIST**. We remember how we were alienated and excluded by the world, in a broken relationship with God, **but now in Christ Jesus**, we have been reconciled to God (our vertical relationship with Christ) and reconciled to all others (horizontal work of the cross). Jesus has torn down the walls between us and empowered us to be One because of Christ. We are able to set aside our man-made agendas and be the new humanity that Christ designed the Church and his followers to be in the midst of our incredibly divisive world.

Conversation with Pastor Irene:

What do you think about this? What is your response?

So how can we model this as the Church and as followers of Jesus?

Let's move the fence. No, LET'S TAKE DOWN THE FENCE!!

Let's agree and let's PRAY in Jesus' name!

## **REMIX Study Guide:**

Open your group in prayer and remember that this is only a guide. Feel free to discuss each of the provided questions in the message notes, or simply dive deeper into just one.

Before you close with prayer, take a few minutes to look over the Three Essential Questions at the end of the document.

### **REMIX: Questions for today's study on Ephesians 2:11-22**

Notice the links on our website for helpful information about hosting or guiding a REMIX discussion. You will find "Tips for hosting a REMIX group or class", suggested schedule for the class, and directions for the class. These notes will be helpful in setting up your REMIX. Here are some questions beyond the notes:

- 1. How does it affect you to "remember" your situation before you knew Christ (2:11-12)? How are you encouraged by meditating on your new humanity?**
- 2. Explain the work of Christ in this passage?**
- 3. Why is the cross of Christ a true game changer, and thus makes unity in the Church and with others possible?**
- 4. What might the "dividing wall of hostility" refer to then and now?**
- 5. What role do you think you might be able to have in breaking down barriers and removing fences between yourself and others?**

**Let's praise God for bringing us so close to Himself and to other believers when at one time we were so far away. Ask Him to work in you to live out the truth that the dividing wall of hostility is down between us all.**

### **Three Essential Questions**

The following questions are intended to be open-ended and encourage members to consider how they felt and what they, or the group, can do as a result of hearing the message!

- 1. What did you hear?** *What point in this message was most impactful for you?*
- 2. What do you think?** *How did this message challenge, change, or affirm your thinking?*
- 3. What will you do?** *How will you or your group put into practice what you have learned today?*