

Ephesians pt 5 (2:11-22)

- 11 The Jews used the derogatory term "uncircumcised" to refer to the Gentiles. Notice Paul specifies physical circumcision as opposed to that of the heart.
- 12 The Gentiles only hope was to convert to Judaism. Otherwise they were excluded from the covenants, the promises of Scripture, had no hope or a relationship with God. I often wonder what life is like in that condition. We take it so much for granted, we need to remember all that we have in Christ.
- 13 "in Christ" – the common thread throughout the letter to the Ephesians, in Christ they are now in on all that they had missed. The blood of Christ is the sacrifice that makes them acceptable just as it makes the Jew acceptable to God. Now the things of God are available to the Gentile.
- 14 There was a little wall that surrounded the Temple in Herod's day. It said that no Gentile could pass that wall, and if they did they would be killed. That is the wall that divided the Gentile from the worship, the sacrifices and presence of God in the Temple. That wall is torn down in Christ. Not long after Paul wrote this it was literally torn down. Now they all have access to the same sacrifice, the cross. Now they can all come into God's presence. That wall brought hostility because it said God is for us but not for you. But Christ became the peace that made us all one.
- 15 How? His flesh became the sacrifice for all. The summary of the regulations that were against us said that if we sin we die. He died in our place. We come to Him and accept the righteous life that He lived in our place. All that do that are one in Him. We all have His righteous life in exchange for our sin. We are no longer Jew and Gentile but redeemed souls with the righteousness of Christ. The Law was a schoolteacher to bring us to Christ. Once we have come to Christ, it is no longer needed.
- 16 The cross ended the Gentile Jew feud. We meet there on the same ground, justified by the same means. The sin that made one more pridefully arrogant than the other, died on the cross in the body of Christ. The word in Greek that is translated 'reconcile' means to bring back to a former state of harmony. Adam once walked with God. There were no Jews and Gentiles. God restored the former state of harmony for all who will come to the cross. Together we are Adam (mankind) restored to the harmony of Eden.
- 17 Far away = Gentiles Near = Jews Though if we examine the sayings of Christ we could look at it in the opposite order. Peace implies harmony. Jesus ministry was divided between Jew and Gentile, but His message was the same to them all, "come to me and I will give you rest".
- 18 No longer do we have to wait for the High Priest to come on the Day of Atonement to go into the Holy of Holies and represent me. The veil is torn, and I am invited in. I have access to God. Revel in that thought, yet tremble at it also. I am invited in to have an audience with the Lord of the universe, the Creator of all things. Dare I come in with any rebellion against

Him in my heart? Will He not see it? 3:12; John 14:6; Hebrews 4:15,16, 10:19-20

19 You were aliens. Now you are citizens of the Kingdom of God. It is not Zionism – the nation of Israelis, that God has called us to. Many are confused on this issue. In Christ we are citizens of the Kingdom of God along with Jewish believers. We come from all denominations and no faith background at all, but now we are all citizens of the same Kingdom. We have become a part of the Family of God. We are all brothers and sisters.

There are three metaphorical pictures for us to consider: Citizenship, Family Member and in the following verses, a temple.

20 Interesting that the foundation of New Jerusalem has the Apostles' names. Are these the Old Testament Prophets who foretold of the Messiah's coming, or the New Testament prophets – proclaiming the word of God? Here the metaphor is a building. What sort of implications do you see?

Cornerstone

Foundation

Walls

Roofing

Windows

Doors

Etc

21 This verse begins and ends "in Him". The building metaphor continues. As we are in Christ Jesus we become shaped to be the part of the building God intends us to be. What happens when we try to function in the church outside Him? The building is a temple. Our coming together and being one is all for the purpose of worship. We aren't a gym for exercise, a warehouse for storage, a factory for production. We are a temple for worship. My Father's house shall be called a house of prayer.

22 You Ephesians, you Sedonans, also, not just the whole body, but there too in your individual fellowships, are a temple in Christ. In the Old Testament the temple sometimes fell into periods of not being used. It needed repairs and cleansing. We do too. We should be a well maintained temple for the Holy Spirit, individually, in our local fellowship, throughout our city, and in the world.